

The CURLY TOPS TOURING AROUND

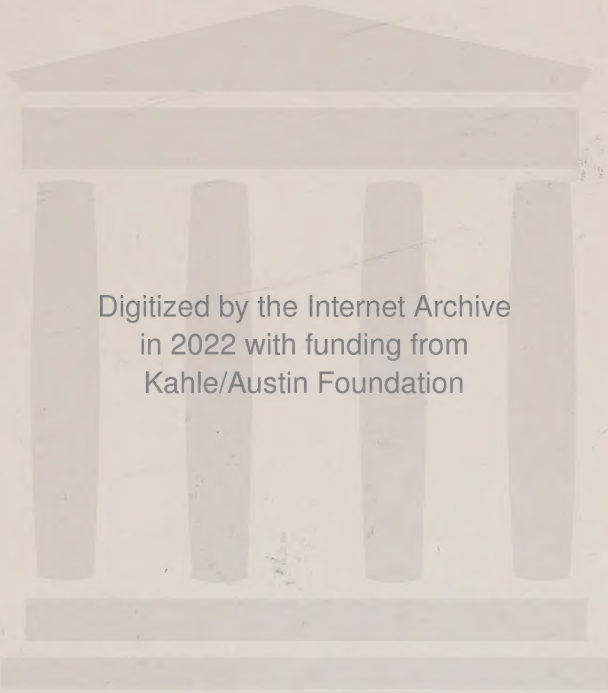


∴ HOWARD R. GARIS ∴

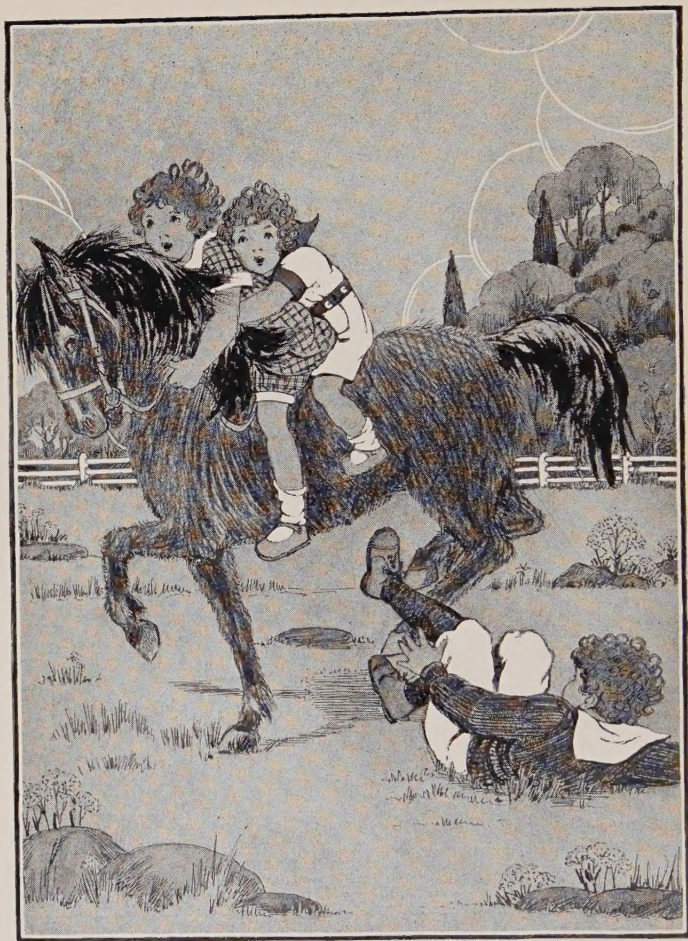
*Historical
Children's Books*

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TED MARTIN HIT THE GROUND WITH A HARD THUMP.
"Curlytops Touring Around"

THE CURLYTOPS TOURING AROUND

OR

The Missing Photograph Albums

BY

HOWARD R. GARIS

AUTHOR OF "THE CURLYTOPS AT CHERRY FARM,"
"THE CURLYTOPS IN THE WOODS," "THE CURLY-
TOPS AT SUNSET BEACH," ETC.

Illustrations by
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THE CURLYTOPS SERIES

By HOWARD R. GARIS

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THE CURLYTOPS AT CHERRY FARM

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Or, Fun in the Lumber Camp

THE CURLYTOPS AT SUNSET BEACH

Or, What Was Found in the Sand

THE CURLYTOPS TOURING AROUND

Or, The Missing Photograph Albums

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THE CURLYTOPS TOURING AROUND

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THE CURLYTOPS TOURING AROUND

CHAPTER I

DOWN THE WELL

"COME on, Jan! Now will be a good time to try it!"

"All right, Ted. But are you sure it will be safe?"

"Course I am! Why, it's a big rope and I'm not very heavy, Jan."

"I know that. But s'posing I shouldn't be able to pull you up again?"

"Well, I could get up by a ladder, I guess. Come on now before Trouble comes out to bother us. He's in the house with mother and we have a good chance now."

Two children, a boy and a girl, each with clustering curls on their heads, darted down a path, around the house, and ran toward the apple orchard at the rear.

Ted Martin's hair was darker than that of his sister Janet, but the locks of each were so clustered on their heads that the children were more often called "Curlytops," than their right name.

Now the curly tops of the brother and sister were bobbing about as they ran along, intent on having what they called "fun," though, as you will soon see, it developed into mischief. But that, as Ted said afterward, wasn't their fault.

"I'm glad Trouble is in the house," remarked Jan, as she hastened along beside her brother.

"So'm I," answered Ted. "William is a good little boy, but when you want to do something he always wants to do something else."

"Always," agreed Janet, with a wise shake of her head.

From this you may know that "Trouble" was only the jolly nickname of the small brother of Ted and Janet. Mother Martin used to call him "Dear Trouble" when he upset a glass of milk on the table or shoved his plate to the floor. Daddy Martin used to speak of William as a "Bunch of Trouble" when he had to drop his paper and

rush out, perhaps to pull the little fellow's head loose from between the fence pickets, where, possibly, he had thrust it.

Ted and Janet called their little brother simply "Trouble" and let it go at that.

The two older children had been playing in the front yard of their home when Ted had suddenly thought of a trick he had been wanting to try for a long while. He had a strange idea in his head, and he needed the help of Janet to carry it out. Now seemed a good time.

It was the beginning of the long vacation from school, and though the Martin family expected to go away for the summer, plans had not yet been made.

So Jan and Ted were amusing themselves as best they could until, tiring of "playing store," into Ted's head had popped his big idea.

"Wait a minute now, Jan!" cautioned Ted, as they neared the back of the house and could look over toward the apple orchard. It wasn't a very large orchard, but there were enough trees to call it by that name. Though, as yet, the season being early, only green apples were on the branches.

"What's the matter—aren't you going to do it?" Jan wanted to know, as her brother put out a hand and detained her behind a screening bush.

"Course I'm going to do it!" he declared. "But I want to look and see if Patrick isn't there. Patrick maybe wouldn't let me do it."

"That's so," agreed Janet. "And if Nora saw us, she maybe wouldn't let us, either."

"No," said Ted, in a low voice. He looked carefully out from the fringe of the bush, but saw neither Patrick, who did odd jobs about the Martin place, nor Nora, the cook; so the coast was clear.

"Come on, Jan!" Ted whispered.

"Oh, I—I'm almost getting scairt!" whispered the little girl, as she and her brother neared the scene of their latest trick.

"Pooh! Silly! What's to be scared of?" asked Ted. "Come on!"

Thus teased, Janet took her brother's hand for a quick dash across the open space to the shelter of the orchard. Suddenly, when the children were halfway over the little space, they heard their names called:

"Ted! Jan! Where are you? Come

here! Mother says you have to 'muse me! Come on!"

"It's Trouble!" gasped Janet.

"And we've got to amuse him!" sighed Ted. "Oh, jinkity jinks!"

He kicked the sand at his feet peevishly.

"Come on! Let's make believe we didn't hear him. He hasn't seen us and we can hide from him."

Janet was about to agree to this, but Trouble was smarter than either of the older ones gave him credit for. He had run on after his first call, and now he stood where he could look full at Ted and Jan.

"I see you!" he laughed. "You playin' hide-an'-find? Anyhow, mother says you have to 'muse me! Go on! 'Muse me!"

Mrs. Martin often, when she was tired of looking after William or when she had to do something else, would call to the other children:

"Come and amuse Trouble!"

Nearly always Jan or Ted would be glad to do this. But now they had something else they wanted to do.

"Too late!" sighed Ted. "We can't skip away from him now."

"No, if we did he'd tell mother," agreed

Janet. "Oh, I know what we can let him do! He can do it all alone, too, so we can go to the diamond mine!" she added.

"What?" asked Ted, to whom the reference to a "diamond mine," did not seem strange. That was part of the game they were going to play.

"I'll get the sifter we were using when we played store, and I'll let Trouble sift a lot of sand and tell him to pick out all the stones," suggested the little girl. "That will keep him amused a long while."

"Yes, I guess it will," stated Ted.

"You playin' hide-an'-find?" asked Trouble again. This was his name for the game of hide-and-seek.

"No, we aren't playing that, Trouble dear," said Jan, with more sweetness than usual in her voice. She wanted to be nice to her little brother so he would be satisfied to play by himself.

"You goin' to 'muse me?" demanded the little fellow.

"Sure we are!" exclaimed Ted. "I'll get the sifter," he told Janet. "You keep him here a minute."

"Come here and I'll tell you a little story," offered Janet.

"I'm comin'," Trouble announced, as he toddled to his sister. She kept him amused until Ted came running back with the sieve which, a little while before, he and Janet had borrowed from Nora in the kitchen so they could use it in sifting sand, which they pretended was sugar in their play store.

Near the spot where Trouble had so unexpectedly found his brother and sister was some clean sand, and it was this that Janet had thought William could be induced to play with, while she and her brother went on with their own plans.

And, for once at least, Trouble did just what was wanted of him.

"See the nice sand, Trouble," murmured Janet. "Look, you put it in this sifter and you jiggle it and all the nice little sand falls through. The big stones and little stones stay inside. Then you pick out all the stones and put them in a pile and you sift more sand. See!"

"Yep, I see," murmured Trouble. "Let me shift sand."

Janet gave him the sieve and filled it for him. He moved it to and fro and a little pile of fine sand grew in the shape of a pyra-

mid. Trouble looked at the stones left in the sieve.

"What I do wif these?" he asked.

"Put 'em in a pile and then we'll make believe they're raisins and we'll stick 'em in mud pies," said Ted.

"Oh, I like to make mud pies!" cried Trouble, with shining eyes.

"Yes, but not now! Not now! After a while!" cried Janet quickly, for the little fellow seemed ready to drop the sieve. "What did you want to say that for?" she asked Ted, in a whisper. "You'll spoil everything! Leave it to me!"

"Oh, all right," mumbled Ted. "Go ahead! As soon as you can leave him alone come on over to the old well."

"All right," answered Janet. "Now, Trouble," she went on, as she filled the sifter again, "shake this out and pick out all the stones. Put the big ones in a pile by themselves and the little ones in a pile by themselves."

"Den we make mud pies," laughed Trouble.

"I guess so—yes—maybe," murmured Janet, who did not want to be too sure on this point. "Now you play here, Trouble,

and don't go away, will you?" she asked, as she prepared to follow Ted.

"Trouble stay here and shift sand," gravely promised the little fellow. "But where you goin', Jan?" he asked suspiciously.

"Oh, just over here a little way," she answered. "I'll soon be back. Now sift a lot of sand, Trouble, and pick out all the stones."

"Aw right—I shift sand."

He was having fun now, being "'mused" as his mother had told him he would be, and he did not much care what Ted or Janet did—at least for a while.

"Is he all right?" asked Ted, as his sister joined him under an apple tree where an old well had been dug.

"Yes, I guess he'll stay there until we play diamond mine a while," said Janet. "But are you sure it will be all right, Ted?"

"Sure I am. I'll just step on the bucket and hold to the rope, and all you'll have to do is to keep hold of the handle and let it unwind slowly. Then I'll go down in the well and we'll play it's a diamond mine."

"But how you going to get up again, Ted?" his sister asked.

“Why, you can wind up the handle just as you unwound it, can’t you? It’ll be like pulling up a bucket of water when there used to be water in the well. That’s how I’ll get up.”

“Oh, I see! All right.”

The Curlytops ran over toward the old well, which had not been used for a number of years, the water having seeped out of it, so that the well was dry. But the curbing, the windlass, the bucket, and the rope were still in place, and they had given Ted the idea for playing diamond mine. He had seen some pictures of miners going down a hole in the ground by means of a bucket and rope, and had got the idea that diamonds were thus secured.

The reason Ted and Janet had not, before this, played at the old well, was because they did not know it existed. It was on some land next to their house which Mr. Martin had recently bought. And, learning there was an old well on it, the children’s father had decided to do away with it, for it might be dangerous, even if there was no water in it, for it was about thirty feet deep.

The first step in doing away with the old well had been to have Patrick clear away

the weeds around it. Then the curbing was to have been taken away and the well filled up. But when Patrick had cut down the weeds he was called to other tasks, and so the old well stood plainly revealed.

Ted and Janet had discovered it, and then into Ted's mind had come the idea of going down into the dry well. He had tested the rope, with its bucket and windlass, and found that it worked.

"Now, Jan," said her brother, when they were at the well, with no one near to stop their mischievous play, "I'll climb up and stand on the bucket. You keep hold of the handle and let it unwind slowly. I don't want to go down too fast, you know."

"No, I guess you don't," agreed Jan.

"After I get down to the bottom I'll make believe dig diamonds," went on Ted. "Then you can twist the handle the other way and pull me up. After that I'll let you go down."

"I don't want to go down!" said Jan quickly, after one look into the black depths of the well. "You can go. I don't want to."

"All right," agreed Ted cheerfully. "I'll go down twice. Now get ready."

He climbed the well curbing and put one foot on the edge of the bucket, which was a little way below the top of the curbing, or elevated wooden rim about the well. The rope was wound around a wooden roller, or windlass, to the end of which a crank was made fast. And there was a ratchet catch to prevent the rope from unwinding and letting the bucket down into the well until such time as the person drawing was ready. This catch now prevented Ted from dropping down into the well.

The curly-haired little boy steadied himself on the edge of the bucket by holding to the rope above his head. He looked down into the well. It was deep and black, but there was no water in it, so Ted did not hesitate.

"All right, Jan! Let me down!" he called to his sister.

Already he was a little way down the shaft of the well, for the rope was partly unwound and the bucket perhaps two feet below the top of the curbing when Ted took his place.

Janet loosened the catch of the windlass and then, holding to the handle with all her strength, let it slowly revolve. It would

have gotten out of control, and would have whirled around very fast, for Ted was much heavier than a bucket of water, only the affair was old, rusted and stiff. So, after all, Ted was quite safely lowered.

Down and down he went into the black depths of the old, dry well.

"It's lots of fun, Jan!" he called up. "You'd better come down next time!"

"I don't want to. You can," answered his sister.

"Now I'm all the way down. I'm standing on the bottom!" called up Ted. "I'm going to dig for diamonds!"

Jan could see that there was no longer a strain on the rope. The handle turned freely. Suddenly it gave a little quiver, Jan saw the rope slip loose from around the windlass and then, as the end of it fell down the well, the little girl screamed:

"Oh, Ted! Ted! Oh, something dreadful happened!"

CHAPTER II

GOOD NEWS

DOWN in the dark depths of the old well, Ted Martin heard what his sister called in such frightened tones.

“What’s the matter?” he asked.

A moment later he learned on his own account. For the bucket rope having slipped off the windlass, from which it had rotted away, tumbled down the well. It caught for a moment on a projecting stone, and then went down into the depths. It fell partly on top of Ted’s head as he stepped off the edge of the bucket on to the pile of dried sticks and leaves which had blown and tumbled into the well during the years it had not been in use.

“Oh, Teddy!” cried Janet. “The rope came loose and it fell down!”

“I know it did,” Ted answered. For the rope was coiled about him.

“Then how are you going to get up?” Janet wanted to know. “How are you going to get up out of the well when I can’t wind up the rope?”

To this Ted made answer:

“I don’t know, Jan. I guess I’m in a sort of pickle. But wait a minute. Don’t run away and leave me!”

Janet had no such idea. She wouldn’t desert Ted in trouble.

While the little fellow is down in the old, dry well, trying to think of a way to get out, and while Janet is also puzzling her head over the same matter, I will take just a moment to let my new readers know something about the Curlytops.

I have told you the reason for their nickname. They had been christened in this order: Theodore Baradale Martin, who was called Ted or Teddy, except when he had done something wrong, and then he heard his full name spoken. Next came Janet Louise Martin, which was shortened into Janet or Jan. She was just a year younger than Ted. Last of all was William Anthony Martin. He was “Trouble,” you know.

Mr. Richard Martin, the father of Trouble and the Curlytops, was the owner of a

large, general store in Cresco, in one of our eastern states. In the first book of this series, called "The Curlytops at Cherry Farm," I related how the children went to visit Grandpa Martin on his wonderful farm, and I told you what happened after they reached there. During other vacation seasons the children traveled to Star Island, they were snowed in, visited Uncle Frank's ranch, and camped on Silver Lake with Uncle Ben. The children had some queer pets, as you may learn by reading another book, and they had many playmates with whom they had jolly times. After a trip to the woods, the children found something in the sand, as told in the book just before this, called "The Curlytops at Sunset Beach."

After the summer at the shore the Martin family returned to Cresco. Through the long winter Janet and Ted played in the snow. Then came spring. Now it was summer again and the long vacation had arrived.

"And it means a lot of work, too," sighed Mrs. Martin, on the last day of school. "I'm sure I don't know what the children will do with so much time on their hands!"

But this did not worry Ted, Janet or Trouble. They knew they could have fun, and one of the ways hit on by Ted and his sister was to play "diamond mine," as we find them doing at the old well when this story opens.

"Do you think you can get out, Ted?" his sister called anxiously down into the depths of the dark well.

"I don't know," was Ted's answer. "But don't go away. I'm going to try to climb up, Jan."

"How you going to climb up?" the little girl wanted to know.

"Well, there's a lot of stones sticking out on the sides. They're like steps, and maybe I can get up on them."

Ted tried; but though a man or an older boy might have managed to hoist himself out of the well in this way, it was beyond the strength of the Curlytop lad. He got up a little way but slipped back to the soft bed of dried leaves at the bottom of the well.

"Did you hurt yourself?" asked Jan anxiously, as she heard her brother grunt as he slipped back.

"No, I didn't hurt myself," he answered. "But I jiggled myself a little."

Ted's use of the word "jiggled" reminded Jan that she had left Trouble "jiggling" the sieve at the pile of sand. She wondered if her little brother was all right, but she did not want to leave Ted in order to make sure.

However, she did not need to do this for just as Ted called up to her that he was going to try to toss up the rope, so she could fasten it to the windlass, Janet saw her little brother coming along a path that she and Ted had trampled through the weeds.

"Oh, now I is found you!" remarked Trouble, with a smile on his cute, dirty little face. "I is found you! Here is Jan, Mother!" he called more loudly. "I is found her!"

"Is mother looking for us?" asked Janet.

"Yes, Jan," answered the voice of Mrs. Martin herself. "I told you and Teddy to amuse William, and I find him all alone sifting sand. Not but what he was having fun, but I thought you would stay with him. I asked him where you went and he pointed off this way. Why, what are you doing at the old well?" went on the mother who, having followed Trouble along the weed-grown

path, now saw Janet standing near the curbing and windlass. "What are you doing there?" she repeated.

"Teddy — now — Teddy — he's down there!" gasped Jan, pointing.

"Teddy in the well!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin. "Is he——"

"There isn't any water in it," Janet hastened to add, and then Mrs. Martin herself remembered that her husband had told her that same fact. So she asked more calmly:

"How did Teddy get down in the well?" She hurried forward, keeping a tight hold of Trouble's hand, so he wouldn't slip into the black depths.

"We were playing diamond mine," Janet began to explain, when Ted, at the bottom of the well, heard his mother's voice and cried:

"I'm all right! I can get up if you can fasten the rope to the windlass, or lower a ladder to me!"

"Oh, Teddy! Why did you ever go down there?" cried Mrs. Martin, as she leaned over the curbing and looked down. "You shouldn't have done such a thing!"

"I didn't mean to get stuck down here, Mother!" the boy answered. He could look

up and see his mother quite plainly, for she was in the sunlight. But she could hardly see him at the bottom of the well.

"The rope slipped off," explained Janet.

"If we had a cowboy here he could lasso Teddy up," said Trouble, with a laugh.

"Yes, but we haven't any cowboy," said Mrs. Martin. "Jan, you run and tell Patrick to come here. Tell him to bring a ladder. I hope we have one long enough. Hurry, Jan!"

Now that her mother was on the scene, Janet felt sure that Teddy would soon be out of the well. As she hastened back toward the house, she saw Patrick working in the garden.

"Please take a long ladder to the old well so Teddy can get out, Patrick," she begged. "Hurry!"

"What's that, Jan?" asked the man of all work.

When the little girl had explained, Patrick ran off toward the barn, chuckling to himself and saying:

"They call the little one 'Trouble,' but I'm not sure but what it would be a good name for the other two. Sure, they're into

twice as much mischief as William! It's a good thing the well is dry!"

Patrick was on his way to the well, carrying a long ladder, which, he told Janet, would surely reach the bottom, and the little girl was following him when she saw her father coming around the house by a side path.

It was not usual for Mr. Martin to come home from his store in the middle of the afternoon. When he did, something extraordinary nearly always happened, and this time Janet thought he had heard about Teddy. So she said:

"He's all right now, Daddy! We'll soon have him out!"

"Who's all right? Who's going to be out soon?" asked Mr. Martin, much puzzled. "And what are you going to do with that ladder, Patrick?"

"Sure an' I'm going to get Teddy out of the old well."

"Out of the old well?" cried Mr. Martin. "Do you mean to tell me Ted has fallen down there?"

"He didn't perzackly *fall* in," said Janet. "I let him down by the rope, but the rope slipped off and he's down there. He

couldn't climb out, so mother told Patrick to bring the ladder."

"Oh, well, if your mother's there I guess matters will soon be all right," said Mr. Martin, breathing more easily. "Why did you children go to that well? We must fill it up at once, Patrick."

"Yes, sir. I was going to do it this afternoon. But they got ahead of me, the Curlytops did."

Mr. Martin hurried on with Patrick, helping him carry the ladder, while Janet followed. Mrs. Martin and Trouble were still standing at the well curbing, and when Mrs. Martin saw her husband she, too, thought he had come home because of what had happened to Ted.

Then, as she knew he could not have heard of it at the store, she said to Mr. Martin:

"Is anything wrong? Why did you come home at this time of day?"

"Everything is all right," replied Mr. Martin, with a smile. "I came home to tell you some good news. But first we must get Teddy out of the well."

Mr. Martin leaned over and looked down into the depths. Ted saw his father and called to him:

“I’m all right!”

“I’m glad of it,” was the answer. “We’re going to lower the ladder down to you so you can climb up. Stand to one side so it won’t hit you.”

And as her father and Patrick lowered the ladder into the well, Janet wondered what good news it was that had brought Mr. Martin home in the middle of the afternoon.

CHAPTER III

THE CARDWELL ALBUMS

TED MARTIN was in no danger in the dry well. His father and mother knew this as soon as they had looked down at him. There was not a drop of water in the well, and the sides were well walled up so they wouldn't cave in.

"Don't ever do anything like this again, Theodore!" his father said quite sternly to the little chap, as the ladder was being put into place.

"No, sir," answered Teddy.

"We didn't mean to do it," said Janet.

"I know you didn't," her mother admitted. "But just think what would have happened if there had been water in the well?"

"I wouldn't have gone down if there had been water in," Teddy called up, for he could hear what was being said.

"Well, I'm glad you have that much sense," his father told him. "Now, Patrick, you hold the upper end of the ladder steady and I'll put this end down in."

Slowly the ladder was lowered into the well, Teddy crowding back against the stones as he stood on the leafy bottom, so as to be out of the way. At last the ladder was in place.

"Now can you climb up, Ted?" called his father.

"Sure I can climb up," was the answer, and a little later the head of the Curlytop lad appeared above the curbing. There were leaves and dirt and cobwebs in Teddy's hair, but he didn't mind that. "I brought the end of the rope up with me," he said, showing it to his father. "You can fasten it to the windlass if you want to."

"I don't want to," declared Mr. Martin. "And, just so you and Janet won't be tempted to play diamond mine again, we'll drop this old rope back to the bottom of the well. And you must start at once, Patrick, to fill it up."

"Yes, sir, I will," was the answer.

Mr. Martin took the end of the rope from Ted and let it drop back into the black

depths where it fell on the bucket, already on the bottom.

Then the ladder was pulled up, and as Mr. Martin walked back toward the house with his wife and children Patrick got a shovel and began tossing dirt and rocks into the well, to fill it up level.

"There'll be no more Curlytops down in you!" said the man, as he labored away. The wooden curbing was torn loose and the windlass broken. It was the end of the old well.

"But, anyhow, I got down it all right," declared Ted, as he looked back and saw Patrick filling up the hole.

"Yes, but you might not have gotten out so easily if we hadn't come to help you," suggested Mrs. Martin.

"I guess that's right," agreed Ted. "I tried to climb out, but it was hard work."

"He was like 'ding-dong bell, pussy in the well,' wasn't he, Mother?" laughed Trouble, as he stumbled along beside his father.

"Yes, and daddy was Big Johnnie Stout who got Teddy out!" added Janet. "But what's the good news?" she asked. "You said you had good news, Daddy."

"It's about our summer vacation," re-

plied Mr. Martin. "You know, my dear," he went on, turning to his wife, "we haven't been able to make any plans for the vacation, because I didn't know how matters were going at the store. Well, I have just found out that I can get away next week, and be gone for a month, so I hurried home to let you know. We shall have a fine vacation this season!"

"Where are we going?" asked Ted, brushing some of the well dirt from his clothes.

"To the seashore?" asked Janet.

"No, we aren't going any special place," her father replied.

"Oh, I thought you said we were going to have a fine vacation!" objected Ted.

"So I did, and so we are. But we aren't going to any special place. What do you say to touring around—going from place to place in our auto, and perhaps taking a trip in a motor boat? How would my Curlytops like that?" and Mr. Martin ruffled first the hair of Janet and then that of Teddy.

"I think that will be lots of fun!" cried Janet.

"Do you mean touring around in our car

and sleeping in it and camping out and all that?" asked Ted.

"Well, something like that," agreed Mr. Martin. "Of course we can't exactly sleep in our auto, as it isn't a Gypsy wagon. But we can take along a tent that can be fastened to the auto, and we can sleep in that if we wish. Or we can put up at hotels along the way. It will be partly a camping trip."

"Oh, that'll be dandy fun!" cried Ted. "When can we start?"

"Next week. But in the meanwhile don't go climbing into any more wells," urged his father.

"No, sir, I won't!" the Curlytop boy promised. "Oh, hurray for touring around! Hurray for touring around!" he cried, turning a somersault on the grass.

"'Ray! 'Ray!" echoed Trouble, trying to do as he saw his brother do. But Trouble toppled over to one side, laughing as he fell.

"We'll have lovely fun!" confided Janet to her mother. "I think daddy is just wonderful, don't you, Mother?"

"He is, indeed, quite wonderful," agreed Mrs. Martin, with a smile.

From then on, as you can imagine, there were busy times in the home of the Curly-



THE HEAD OF THE CURLYTOP LAD APPEARED ABOVE THE CURBING.

"Curlytops Touring Around"

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tops. Once it was decided that they would spend part of the summer vacation touring around, going to no particular place, but stopping wherever they felt like it, many preparations had to be made.

Mr. Martin owned a big touring car, and he bought a camping outfit and tent to go with it. The tent could be fastened to one side of the car, and cots put beneath the canvas covering.

"The children can sleep in the car, when it rains too hard," decided Mrs. Martin.

"And can we cook, and eat and everything like that out of doors?" Janet wanted to know.

"Of course we have to cook!" declared Ted. "I'm going to make the campfires," he declared.

"We'll see about that," Mr. Martin said. "Very likely we'll take along an alcohol stove. That's more certain for cooking than wet wood. But we can have a campfire once in a while."

Ted and Janet told their many boy and girl chums about the coming touring trip, and all the lads and lassies wished they were as lucky as were the Curlytops.

It was one evening, about four days after

Ted had gone down into the well which was now filled up, that, as the Curlytops and the others of the family were talking about the coming trip, a ring sounded at the front door.

"I wonder who that can be?" said Mrs. Martin.

"Well, it's pretty hard to guess," her husband answered, with a laugh. "But we'll soon see, for Nora is opening the door."

In came Mr. James Cardwell, an elderly neighbor who lived two or three houses down the street. Under his arm Mr. Cardwell carried two large books, which, a second look told Janet and Ted, were old-fashioned photograph albums.

"Good evening, Mr. Cardwell," said Mr. Martin. "Have a chair."

"Thanks, but I didn't come to stay long," said Mr. Cardwell, as he put his albums down on the table. "I came to ask you to do me a favor."

"Did you want our pictures to put in your album, Mr. Cardwell?" asked Ted, for he and Janet had had their photographs taken the week before.

"Thank you, little man, but these albums are filled," was the answer. "I'd like to

get your pictures, though, for another album I have at home. What I came over for," he went on, "is to see if you would take these albums to my brother Reuben in Bentville, Mr. Martin. I hear you are going on a long auto tour, and that you will pass through Bentville. Is that right?"

"Yes, we planned to make Bentville one of our stops," said Mr. Martin, naming a town about three hundred miles away.

"That's my old home," said Mr. Cardwell. "There is going to be a reunion of the Cardwell families there in the fall. We have it every year. All the Cardwells for miles around come to this reunion.

"Now in this album are a lot of pictures of Cardwells that are dead and gone—dead and gone," and the old man's voice trembled. "Some of their relatives would like to look at these pictures. I thought it would be a good plan to have them at the reunion."

"Very nice, I should say," remarked Mrs. Martin.

"That's what I thought. Well, I want to send my albums on ahead, before I start, which won't be until fall. I want to send them to my brother, Reuben Cardwell of Bentville. The albums have been in the

family many years. I'd hate to see them lost, or have anything happen to them. I'm afraid to send them by mail or express. But I thought, as long as you're going to tour out that way, you wouldn't mind, Mr. Martin, leaving these albums with my brother."

"I shall be glad to do that," replied the Curlytops' father. "If you think you can trust me with them," he added.

"Of course I'll trust you," said Mr. Cardwell. "Though we think so much of these albums in our family that I wouldn't trust every one. I don't know what would happen if they got lost or were destroyed. See, here are pictures of my dear little twin girls, who died when they were ten years old. They're the only pictures we have of them—Mary and Alice."

He turned the heavy pages and showed pictures of two pretty girls, with long, curling hair. The pictures were of a bygone time, old-fashioned and rather strange to the Curlytops. But they could see that Mr. Cardwell thought a great deal of them and of the albums.

"And here is another picture we prize highly," said the elderly neighbor. "It's a picture of my brother's boy Tom. He was

only eighteen," and he turned to the photograph of a fine-looking lad.

"Did he die, too?" asked Mrs. Martin softly.

"Yes—at least, we suppose so," said Mr. Cardwell gently. "He went away to be a sailor. His ship was sunk and we never heard anything more from him. I suppose the poor young fellow died at sea. This is the only picture of him, and I know how badly my brother would feel if it were lost. So will you take charge of these old family albums, Mr. Martin, and deliver them in Bentville?"

"Yes, I'll be very careful of them," promised Mr. Martin. "I know what it means to lose such things."

"Didn't they ever find the boy who was lost at sea?" asked Ted, to whom this little story appealed greatly.

"No, Ted, we never heard a word from him," sighed Mr. Cardwell. "I suppose the sea has him. He is as much lost as my dear little twin girls are," and he turned back to the pictures of the children.

"I have a small chest, or box, down at the store, Mr. Cardwell," said Mr. Martin, as

the caller was about to leave. "I'll put your albums in that chest so they will be safe."

"Thank you. Tell my brother, when you see him, why I sent them to him this way—I didn't like to trust the mails or the express, and I won't be out to Bentville myself until fall."

"I'll tell him," was the promise.

Ted and Janet were looking at the queer, heavy covers of the old books and wondering what games the pictured children used to play when they were on earth, when suddenly from outside came a number of sounds.

There was the sound of the clanging of bells, the blowing of whistles and the shouting of men and boys.

"It's a fire! A fire down the street!" cried Ted, as he raced to the door. "Oh, Mr. Cardwell, I guess your house is on fire!"

CHAPTER IV

A BIG CROWD

NOTHING causes quite so much excitement as does a fire. And when the fire is on your own street, and near your house, and perhaps in the home of some one you know—why, then there is excitement enough to cause even the grown-ups to move about quickly.

And this is just what happened when Ted Martin called out:

“I guess your house is on fire, Mr. Cardwell!”

Mr. and Mrs. Martin, as well as their visitor who had brought the two old photograph albums with him, ran to the door. And you may be sure that Janet was there ahead of them, for she had heard what her brother shouted. William, also, was right there, making his way in and out among chairs until he finally pushed through between Ted’s legs as that lad stood on the porch.

"I'm goin' to fire!" cried the little fellow.

"No, Trouble! You stay here!" commanded Ted, catching hold of him just in time.

"It is a fire, surely enough," declared Mrs. Martin, when she had looked down the street.

"And it's near my house, if it isn't in it!" exclaimed Mr. Cardwell. "Excuse me!" he said hastily, as he pushed his way between Ted and Janet on the steps. "But I'd better get down there!"

"I'll come and help," offered Mr. Martin.

"May I come?" asked Ted.

"No, Son, you stay with your mother," directed his father.

As the two men hurried out of the front gate, joining the throng that was running toward the scene of the fire, Mrs. Martin took Trouble by one hand and Janet by the other and said:

"We'll just walk down a little way to see what's going on. Come along, Ted."

Much pleased that he did not have to stay away altogether from the fire, the Curlytop lad followed his mother and the others. The engines were already on hand, and it

was their puffing and tooting of whistles that had made some of the noise.

"It isn't Mr. Cardwell's house, though," said Mrs. Martin, when she and the Curly-tops, with Trouble, had gone far enough down the street to see just where the fire was. "It's next door to him."

"I wouldn't want a fire next door to me," sighed Janet.

"I would!" cried Ted. "You could see it fine!"

"A fire is a terrible thing," said Mrs. Martin. "We shouldn't want one anywhere near us."

"Oh, no, of course not! I don't exactly *want* one," admitted Ted. "But if one has *got* to come I wish it would be near our house, but not in it, so I could see it good."

"This isn't a very big fire," observed Janet, when they had watched for a few minutes. "I guess it's out now."

"I hope so," said her mother.

And such proved to be the case, for in a little while the firemen who had rushed into the home of Mr. Blakeson, next door to the residence of Mr. Cardwell, came out with a long, thin hose. It was the hose from the chemical engine, and not the big water hose.

"It was only a fire in the chimney," said Mr. Martin, as he came walking back with Mr. Cardwell. "No damage done, but the folks were pretty well frightened. They put it out with chemicals."

"How could a chimney be on fire?" Jan wanted to know. "A chimney is brick, and bricks can't burn."

"It isn't the bricks that burn," her father explained. "But when a chimney has been used a number of years it gets coated, or lined on the bricks inside, with soot. Soot contains oils and other things that burn. Finally, some day, a hot fire sets the soot inside the chimney on fire, and it burns fiercely. And if it burned long enough it would make the bricks so hot that they would set fire to the roof or the wooden parts of the house near them. That's why a chimney fire is dangerous, even though the bricks themselves can't burn."

"Did they put salt on the fire?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Ho! Ho!" laughed Ted. "I've heard of putting salt on the tail of a wild bird to tame it, but I didn't know you put salt on a fire."

"Yes, you do, sometimes," stated Mr.

Martin. "Salt is said to put out chimney fires. Some sort of chemical is released when salt is heated, and this smothers the fire in the chimney. But the firemen put this fire out, and without any damage being done."

"I'm glad of that," said Mrs. Martin, as they went back to the house.

"And I'm glad the fire wasn't in my house," remarked Mr. Cardwell. "If it had been, and if those albums had burned, with those pictures of my children and my brother's boy—pictures we never could get again—my wife and I would have felt very sad. My wife thinks a great deal of those albums. I've been planning for a long time to send them out to my brother, but we never dared trust them to any one before. I hope you will take good care of them, Mr. Martin."

"Oh, I surely will, Mr. Cardwell," replied the father of the Curlytops.

That night, when the children were in bed and Mr. and Mrs. Martin were quietly talking over their plans for the coming tour around the country, Mrs. Martin said:

"I almost wish you didn't have to bother

with those two big albums of pictures, Dick!"

"Why?" asked her husband.

"Oh, just suppose something happens to them?"

"Nothing will happen to them. I'll pack them in that small chest I have down at the store, and we'll put it in the back of the auto. When we reach Bentville I'll give the albums to Mr. Cardwell's brother. That will end the matter."

"I shall be glad when it is ended," said Mrs. Martin, as she carefully carried the precious old books of pictures upstairs with her.

"What are you going to do with them, my dear?" asked her husband, as he noticed what she was doing.

"I thought I'd have them handy so I could pick them up and run out with them in case our house caught fire during the night."

"Oh, nonsense!" laughed Mr. Martin. "Nothing is going to happen!"

But it did. Not that night, nor the next night, but before very long, as you shall read.

Ted and Janet, with Trouble also, were

very busy the next day, going over their toys and playthings to pick out the things they wanted to take on the tour with them. Jan had a number of dolls, a ball, some books, a few things she thought her dolls might need and even a carriage. Ted had picked out some books, his top, a pair of roller skates and a bow and arrows.

"Why, children, you can't take all those things!" laughed their mother. "There wouldn't be room in the auto, for one thing, and, besides, you will have no time to play with your toys. We shall be traveling most of the day, and at night you'll want to sleep. Don't take any of those things."

After some talk Ted and Janet agreed to limit the toys they would take with them. Janet picked out the doll she liked best and one book, and Ted took a ball and a book. As for Trouble——

Well, by the time Mrs. Martin had settled on what the two older children could take, she had forgotten about Trouble. Then, all of a sudden, she remembered him.

"Where is William?" she asked.

Ted and Janet looked at each other. They, too, had forgotten their small brother. But a moment later a cry was heard:

"Come and get me out! Come and get me out!"

"There's Trouble now!" exclaimed Janet.

"Oh, what has happened to William now?" sighed Mrs. Martin.

By this time Janet had run into the front yard, and from there she shouted:

"Here's Trouble! He's all right! But he's got his head stuck in the fence and he can't get loose!"

Mrs. Martin and Ted rushed out to find that the little boy had stuck his head in between two pickets of the fence, at a place where one picket was loose. His head had gone in easily enough, but when he tried to draw back his ears stuck out so he couldn't.

"Oh, my poor little William!" said his mother.

"I'll get him loose!" exclaimed Ted, which he did, by pulling off the loose picket so there was room enough for his little brother to draw back his head.

Trouble was frightened, and the skin, back of his ears, was scratched a little, but otherwise he was not hurt.

"What made you stick your head through the fence like that, William?" his mother asked him.

"I—now—I was pickin' a flower to take in the auto with us," Trouble explained. "I reached through the fence to get the posie."

"Oh, the little darling!" murmured Jan, kissing him. "I'll pick flowers for you," she offered. "Don't stick your head through the fence again."

She went out and found where her little brother had reached out to gather some flowers that grew just beyond the fence. He could have gone out of the gate to get them, but, instead, he reached through the pickets. Jan picked some blossoms and took them to Trouble.

Such happenings as this did not worry Mrs. Martin much, for so many of them took place each day that she was getting used to them. Trouble soon stopped his crying and went out to play with Ted and Janet, while their mother went on with the preparations for the auto tour.

Mr. Martin, that day, brought home the small, stout box to hold the Cardwell albums, and they were put in and locked up, ready to be taken to Mr. Reuben Cardwell of Bentville.

In a few days all was in readiness for the start. Mr. Martin left his store in charge

of his head clerk, the house was closed up, the auto had been piled with valises, and the tent, for sleeping at night, had been strapped on the running-board. In piled the Curlytops and Trouble and Mr. Martin blew the horn.

“Good-by! Good-by!” called friends, neighbors and the playmates of the children.

“Good-by! Good-by!” echoed the Curlytops.

Just then along came running Jack Turton, a funny little fat chap. He was all out of breath.

“What’s the matter, Jack? Is there a fire?” asked Mr. Martin, as he was about to start the auto.

“No, sir. But there’s a terrible big crowd down in the meadow near the white bridge!” gasped Jack. “Oh, it’s a terrible big crowd, and I’m going down to see. Maybe there’s somebody drowned!”

Away he rushed, as fast as his fat legs would take him.

CHAPTER V

MOVING PICTURES

WELL did the Curlytops know the place spoken of in such a hurry by fat Jack Turton. Ted and Janet had often gathered flowers in the meadow, and Ted had, more than once, caught fish under that same white bridge spoken of by the fat lad.

"The water is deep down by the white bridge," said Ted, as he watched Jack hurrying down the street. Other children, gathered to say good-by to the Curlytops, had heard what Jack said about a big crowd in the meadow, and they were following him down to the place.

"I hope no one is drowned," murmured Mrs. Martin, looking at her three children in the auto and feeling thankful that they were safe with her.

"Oh, Daddy!" exclaimed Janet, "couldn't we drive down past the meadow on our way and see what the crowd is there for?"

"Maybe it's a circus!" exclaimed Trouble, who had caught some of the talk, but didn't know exactly what it was all about.

"No, it can't be a circus," declared Ted. "There haven't been any circus posters around town. I'd have seen 'em if there was."

"It isn't a circus," decided Mr. Martin. "I think, as long as we have time, that I'll drive around that way. We can take the road over the white bridge as well as any other."

In fact, the Curlytops were going to tour around the country, not going to any certain place at any certain time, so they could do as they pleased, which is half the fun of touring.

"Dick," said Mrs. Martin, touching her husband gently on the arm as he was about to start the car down the street after Jack and the other children, "perhaps we had better not go down there."

"Why not?" he asked.

"If it's a drowning it would be a sad sight, and——"

Mr. Martin appeared undecided as his wife brought this thought to his mind, and it might have been that he would have taken

some other route, except that he saw Doctor Whitney driving along in his small car. The physician was coming from the direction of the white bridge.

"Dr. Whitney will know if an accident has happened," said Mr. Martin. "If there's been a drowning he wouldn't be coming away from it. He would stay there and try to save the drowned person."

"Please ask him," suggested Mrs. Martin.

Accordingly her husband called:

"Anything the matter down at the white bridge, Doctor?"

The doctor brought his car to a halt near that of the Curlytops, and waved his hand to the children after he had raised his hat to Mrs. Martin.

"Drowning at the white bridge?" he asked. "No, nothing like that. Though there may be if they keep on. There's a big crowd there and some of the youngsters may fall in."

"What's going on?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Is it a circus?" Trouble asked. "I'd like to see a nellifunt!"

"Yes, you saw one once!" laughed his mother.

"No, it isn't a circus, though the kids are

having almost as much fun as if there was one," chuckled the doctor. "And the men are having as much trouble trying to keep the boys and girls back as though there were two circuses."

"Sounds rather interesting!" laughed Mr. Martin. "But I'm glad no one is drowned—that's what fat little Jack suggested."

"What in the world is it?" asked Mrs. Martin, and Ted and Janet listened eagerly to the answer of the physician, for they could not imagine what was happening at the white bridge.

"It's moving pictures," the doctor replied.

"Moving pictures!" cried the Curlytops together, just as twins might have done. But Ted and Janet were not twins, though they were born on the same day of the year. Ted was exactly a year ahead of his sister.

"I didn't know they were showing movies in the meadow," said Mr. Martin.

"They aren't *showing* moving pictures," replied Doctor Whitney. "They're *taking* them."

"Taking movies!" gasped Ted. "Oh, I want to see that!"

"Real moving pictures?" Janet wanted to know.

"I guess they're real enough," answered the doctor. "I don't know much about such things, but there is a company of men and women down in the meadow, posing around on the bridge and on boats in the river. They're all painted up—I mean their faces—and they are wearing fancy clothes. A lot of men with megaphones are shouting directions, and other men are grinding away at the cranks of moving picture machines. So I guess it's real enough."

"Oh, Daddy, please take us there!" begged the Curlytops.

"Shall we go, Mother?" asked Mr. Martin of his wife.

"Yes, I would like to see it," she answered. "And I'm sure the children would be amused."

"Oh, say, I guess we would!" murmured Janet.

"Come on, Dad! Step on it!" cried Ted, meaning for his father to press on the gasoline accelerator of the car and move the machine faster.

"Ted and Janet, they didn't 'muse me,"

remarked Trouble. "An' Ted, he fell down in the well—he did!"

He remembered this event quite clearly.

"Well, we hope no one falls into the river," laughed Mrs. Martin, as they said good-day to Doctor Whitney and moved along. A large creek, or a small river, whichever way you looked at it, flowed under the white bridge on the outskirts of Cresco.

"Let's go! Let's go!" chanted Ted.

"I'd love to watch them take movies," remarked Janet. "I've never seen them do it."

"I did once, at a baseball game," stated Ted. "But it didn't amount to much. This'll be a lot better."

As the Curlytops approached the white bridge and the meadow through which flowed the river, they saw others also hurrying to the scene. For Cresco was a small city, or a large town, you might say, and anything like excitement—such as taking moving pictures near it—was sure to draw a throng.

As Mr. Martin drove his car over the bridge and down a lane into the meadow, where many other cars were parked, there

was no doubt about what was going on. Moving pictures were certainly being taken there, or "filmed," to use the right word.

"Oh, look at the cowboys!" cried Ted, for some of the actors were attired in western suits—big hats, "chaps," or leather breeches, and spurs on their shoes, while some of them carried coils of ropes. "They're lassoes," explained Ted.

"Pooh, I knew that!" scoffed Jan.

"Why, there's quite a company of them!" remarked Mrs. Martin, as she noticed the number of men and women who, it was plain to be seen, were not residents of Cresco. They belonged to the company. "Why do you suppose they came here to take pictures?" she asked her husband.

"It's hard to say," he answered. "Probably the play they are taking needed just such a scene in it as this bridge, river and meadow provide. The company is out on 'location,' as it is called. That is, they have come out from their studio, or the 'lot,' as they call it, and they have found just the right location for making certain scenes."

"Oh, look, that lady is going to jump from the boat!" cried Janet, pointing to a

small skiff on the river, which held one young lady and several men.

The actress was, indeed, standing up in the bow of the boat and, as Jan had said, seemed about to jump into the river. One man was rowing the boat, and the other, in the stern, was moving forward as if to stop the young lady from leaping overboard.

"This is great!" cried Ted, with shining eyes.

"Awfully exciting," admitted Janet.

"It's like a circus," said Trouble. "But I don't see any nellifunts! Where are the nellifunts?"

Several persons standing near Mr. Martin's car laughed at this. But they quickly looked away from the Curlytops and toward the boat on the river as the young lady in it gave a scream and leaped into the water, making a great splash.

"Oh, my goodness!" cried Mrs. Martin. "There'll be a drowning after all!"

CHAPTER VI

THE ALBUMS ARE GONE

MORE than one, at least in the crowd that had gathered to watch the movie folk, was almost as much excited as was Mrs. Martin, when they saw the actress jump out of the boat into the river. But Mr. Martin quickly understood that it was all part of the work of making moving pictures, and said:

"It's all right, Mother! Don't worry!"

"They'll get her out!" added Ted.

"Look, there goes a man in after her now!"

As he spoke the man in the stern of the boat threw off his coat and leaped with a great splash into the water after the young lady.

"And they're taking pictures of it all the while!" called out Jan. "Oh, I wish I could see them on the screen!"

What Janet said was true—from the time the boat started up the stream near the

white bridge until the moment when the young lady leaped out and the actor leaped after her, men on the bank, and also men in another boat, were quickly turning the handles of their moving picture cameras, filming every action of the actors and actresses.

"Why do they have three cameras, Daddy?" asked Janet, for she noticed at least this number of men, with their caps on backward, grinding away.

"There are two reasons for that," answered Mr. Martin. "One reason is that one film might be spoiled, and if it was the only one taken all the work would have to be done over again. Another reason is that the pictures give different views of the same scene, and it cannot be told, until after the films are developed and printed, which is the best. So they take two or three, the same as a photographer takes more than one picture of you when you go to his studio."

"Did they take more than one picture of the little twin girls that died?" Janet asked, pointing to where, in a box in the rear of the auto, the two Cardwell albums had been

placed. "And did they take two pictures of the boy who was lost at sea?"

"I don't know about that," her father answered. "I suppose they did, though the pictures were taken a number of years ago when it wasn't as easy to make photographs as it is now. When those twin girls and the Cardwell boy sat for their portraits, moving pictures weren't thought of—at least, not as we see them now."

"There—they've got her!" cried Ted, as he saw the man from the boat reach the girl who had leaped overboard. "She's saved!"

"Well, I'm glad of that," remarked Mrs. Martin, with a sigh of relief.

"But she wasn't going to drown, anyhow!" went on the Curlytop lad. "She knew, all the while, that she'd be saved, didn't she, Daddy?"

"I guess she did," Mr. Martin admitted, with a smile. "These movie people don't take many chances. Of course, some of them who do 'stunts' run into danger, but, in the main, they are pretty careful. I guess this young lady was a good swimmer."

"They're taking more pictures of her," cried Jan. "Look! She's on the bank over

there and they're taking a lot more pictures of her."

"So they are," agreed Mrs. Martin. "The poor thing—they won't even give her a chance to get into dry clothes."

"Probably the story of this movie doesn't call for that," suggested Mr. Martin. "The young lady may have to be shown coming up from the water dripping wet."

That seemed so, for as soon as the man who had jumped from the boat into the water after the actress began to carry her in his arms up the bank of the creek, some of the camera men ran around with their machines and again began grinding very fast at the handles.

"Oh, it must be wonderful to be a movie actress!" sighed Jan.

"I'd like to be one of the cowboy actors!" exclaimed Ted, looking at the men in western costume, who, just then, did not seem to have much to do. They were standing idly about near their horses.

"Well, if being a movie actress means jumping into a river with all your clothes on, I beg to be excused," laughed Mrs. Martin.

"I'm glad we came here," said Ted.
"Aren't you, Jan?"

"I just guess I am!" she murmured.
"Oh, look! Now she's running away from the man who saved her!"

Indeed, this very scene was then taking place, and it caused some more excitement.

For the young lady, dripping wet as she had been taken from the water, had rested on the bank only a moment, while some pictures of her and her rescuer were taken, and then, with a scream, she broke away from the man and rushed off across the meadow.

But it was all part of the play that was being taken, for the Curlytops noticed that the young lady was running straight toward a camera that had been set up near a clump of willow trees. And as she approached the machine the man behind it kept it focused, or "aimed," as Ted said, straight at the actress, picturing her every movement.

"I wish they'd take a picture of a nelli-funt!" sighed Trouble, and again his queer remark caused a laugh.

"I guess they haven't any elephants in this outfit," remarked a man standing near the Martin auto.

"What do you suppose it's all about?"

asked Mrs. Martin of her husband, as they got out of the car and walked toward a group of the picture people. "I mean what is the story they are filming?"

"I don't know, and I doubt very much if even those taking part in it know what it's all about," said Mr. Martin. "You see," he explained, "in taking moving pictures they make views of all the scenes that take place in a certain spot all at once. That's so they won't have to come back to it again. Now they may take views of the cowboys here at the bridge and also pictures of the girl in the boat. But the cowboy scenes may be shown at the beginning of the finished film, and the scene we have just witnessed may be at the very end. That's how movie work is done."

"Look, they're going to take cowboy pictures now!" cried Ted, as he saw some camera men approaching a group of the horsemen. And the cowboys, who had been idly talking, now leaped to their saddles as if to be in readiness for something.

"Yes," remarked Mr. Martin, as he glanced across the meadow, nodding to several Cresco men whom he knew, "I think they have finished filming the drowning lady for the present. She may put on dry clothes

and take part in some other part of the play. Now we'll watch the cowboys. They'll make it lively, I think."

"Have we time to stay here and watch this?" asked Mrs. Martin, as she followed her husband and the children from the auto out over the green meadow.

"Oh, yes," he answered. "We are off on a pleasure tour, you know, and this is giving the children as much pleasure as anything we could let them see. It is educational, too, and this seems like a company of nice people."

"Will it be safe to leave the car?" went on his wife.

"Oh, surely!" laughed Mr. Martin. "No one will run away with it. There are police here," and he pointed to some of the Cresco force that had gathered to keep order while moving pictures were being taken. "Besides, I'll lock it; then it will be safe."

This he did, and then he took the Curlytops, his wife, and Trouble over where they would have a good view of what the cowboys were about to enact.

"What company is this?" asked Mr. Martin of Mr. Taylor, the feed merchant.

"Oh, it's one that makes funny films,"

was the answer. "Comedies, you know. They have a studio in Mansfield, but they're out here just for the day. Quite a sight, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's interesting," admitted Mr. Martin.

"Your children are taking it all in," added Mr. Taylor, laughing.

"They don't miss much," admitted Mr. Martin.

By this time, with the Curlytops and Trouble in a place where they would have a good view, that part of the play in which the cowboys had a part began to be filmed.

One actor waved his hat and flapped it against the sides of his pony, starting it off at a fast gallop down the meadow. As he rode along the children could see cameras grinding away, taking pictures of this fast ride. Then, after the first man, rode a number of others. Now began a scene of great excitement, for the cowboys chasing after the one who had first ridden away began firing their big revolvers and shouting at the tops of their voices.

"My goodness!" cried Mrs. Martin, holding her hands over her ears at the sounds

of shooting. "I hope they aren't firing real bullets!"

"They're only blank cartridges," declared Teddy. "Aren't they, Daddy!"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Oh, look!" suddenly cried Jan. "One man fell off his horse!"

That actually happened to one of the riders chasing after the lone cowboy. Off his horse he rolled, tumbling over and over. The pony got up after the fall and walked about, beginning to eat grass as if nothing had happened. The cowboy, also, picked himself up and walked with a limp over to get back on his steed.

"I'm glad he wasn't hurt," said Mrs. Martin.

"Oh, he did that on purpose!" said Ted.

"I guess he did," Mr. Martin agreed. "They want to make the picture look as natural as possible, so often the riders fall off on purpose."

"I should think they'd be hurt," observed the mother of the Curlytops.

"Cowboys know how to fall," said Ted. "Maybe I'm going to be a cowboy when I grow up, and ride a bucking bronco."

"An' maybe I'll ride a nellifunt!" declared Trouble.

After an exciting chase, which was all taken in by the cameras, the cowboys quieted down. This seemed to be the end of making pictures for that time and in that place. The actors and actresses hurried to waiting automobiles, and the camera men began taking the long-legged tripods from their machines.

"You picked a good spot to leave your car, Mr. Martin," said Mr. Taylor, as the family was walking back to resume their tour.

"What do you mean?"

"Your machine is right next to that of Harry Portnay, the actor. That's his car there," and Mr. Taylor pointed. "He's getting into it now. His car is the same make as yours and the same kind."

"Oh, is that Mr. Portnay?" exclaimed Mrs. Martin. "I've often seen him in the films. How interesting! He was one of the cowboys, wasn't he?"

"Yes," agreed Mr. Taylor. "And he's very funny. He's the one who fell off his horse."

"No wonder he knew how to fall!" laughed Ted. "I like him!"

Indeed, Mr. Portnay was well known in the films, and quite a favorite with boys and girls. Ted and Janet had often seen the Portnay pictures in the Cresco theater.

With wondering eyes at being this near to a real movie actor, the Curlytops watched Mr. Portnay get into his car and drive away with others of his company who had come to Cresco on location.

"Well, I guess the excitement is all over," remarked Mr. Martin, as the crowd began leaving the field when the actors and camera men had moved away.

"But we saw a lot, didn't we, Jan?" asked Ted.

"It was wonderful!" she returned. "I'd like to see it all over again!"

"But we must start on our tour, if we're going," said Mrs. Martin, as she lifted Trouble into the car. "Come along, Curlytops."

Mr. Martin looked over his machine, to make sure everything was all right. He counted the bags, valises, and other things they had brought with him, and noted that

the tent to be used for camping was on the running-board.

Suddenly he gave a start of surprise and asked his wife:

“Did you move that box of albums?”

“You mean the Cardwell albums?”

“Yes. It was in the back of the car. Did you move it?”

“No, I didn’t touch it. I saw it there when we got out, though.”

“Well, it isn’t there now!” exclaimed her husband. “The Cardwell albums with the old pictures in them are gone! I wonder who could have taken them!”

CHAPTER VII

ON THE TRAIL

THE Curlytops, and Trouble also, were so much taken up with watching the moving picture people leave the meadow that for a time they did not listen to what their father and mother were talking about. But at last Jan heard something said about the Cardwell albums and asked:

“Did we lose them out of our car?”

“No; we had them when we parked here,” answered her father. “I remember putting the box under a robe, so it wouldn’t be in plain sight. It could be mistaken for a fancy box of lunch, I thought, and some hungry boys, thinking it contained sandwiches, might be tempted to take it.”

“Did they?” asked Ted.

“Some one has taken the box with the albums in it,” answered Mr. Martin. “It’s gone!”

"Let's look again, to make certain," suggested his wife. "We don't want to make a fuss and then find the box, after all."

"I don't believe we'll find it," replied Mr. Martin, and there was a worried look on his face. "It isn't in the car—it's been taken out. And what to say to Mr. Cardwell I don't know! He will be very sorry to learn that the albums are gone, for he never again can get pictures of his twin girls who are dead. And that sailor boy's picture, too! That's gone."

"Oh, perhaps we'll find the box and the albums," said Mrs. Martin more cheerfully. "No one would really steal them—they would be of no value to any one."

"No; and that's what I can't understand!" complained the father of the Curlytops. "But the albums are gone, sure enough!"

It really seemed so, for when the children—even Trouble helping—had looked through the car, the box was not to be found.

"Well, I don't know what to do," said Mr. Martin, walking up and down with a worried air, beside his auto. "I don't want to go back and tell Mr. Cardwell we have

lost his valuable relics. And yet it isn't fair to him not to let him know."

"Maybe he came here himself and got them," suggested Ted.

"What do you mean, Son?" asked his father.

"I mean that maybe after he gave them to you he found out he was going to Bentville himself, and he came here to tell you. He didn't see us, because we were looking at the cowboys, and he just took the box out of our car."

"He wouldn't do that without telling me," said Mr. Martin. "No, something else happened. I wish I knew what. I'd like to get those albums back."

While Mr. Martin was still nervously pacing up and down beside his auto and Mrs. Martin was making another search among the robes and valises for the box, one of the cowboys who had taken part in the moving picture rode past. Ted and Janet looked at him with eager eyes, for he was a hero to them.

Seeing the children, the actor smiled, and then, noticing that something was wrong, he stopped his horse, removed his big, broad-

brimmed hat in a bow to Mrs. Martin and asked:

"Is anything wrong? Can I help you? Did some of our people bump into your car? I know that sometimes happens when a crowd gathers as we are taking films."

"No, nothing like that happened," answered Mr. Martin. "But I left a box with some valuable books in it here in my car, and now the box is gone. I suppose some one in the crowd thought it contained food and made off with it. I wish they'd bring it back, for the books are of no value except as keepsakes to a family in Bentville where we are going."

"What sort of box was it?" asked the cowboy, one of the last of the moving picture actors to leave the green meadow near the white bridge.

"It was a dark red wooden box, with inlaid pieces of light wood," Mr. Martin explained. "It had a brass handle to carry it by. It was a box I used to keep my papers in at my store. But I had put these books in it for safety. I might better have left them out."

"Was it a box about so long?" asked the

cowboy, holding his hands out about two feet apart.

"Yes," answered Mr. Martin.

"Then I know where it is!" exclaimed the cowboy.

"You do?" cried Mr. and Mrs. Martin together, while the Curlytops gazed at the rider with eager eyes. As for Trouble, he was gazing at the horse and murmuring:

"You aren't as big as a nellifunt! I fed a nellifunt peanuts once, I did!"

"Yes, I know where your box is; or at least, I know who took it," went on the actor. "It was all due to a mistake."

"Who has it?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"I think you will find it in the car of Mr. Harry Portnay, our head actor, or leading man, as we call it," replied the cowboy, with a smile.

"What would he be doing with old photograph albums?" asked Mr. Martin. "For those are the books in the box—just old photograph albums, though they contain pictures highly valued by those who own them."

"Mr. Portnay didn't want the albums," said the actor, who gave his name as Ned Weldon. "But his helper, Jim Lewis, took

them to him by mistake. Lewis thought your box was Mr. Portnay's make-up box."

"Make-up box? Do you mean the box with false mustaches and grease paint and things like that in it?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Yes," answered the cowboy. Later Mrs. Martin explained to the Curlytops that actors when they "dress up" as different characters must also change their faces as well as their clothes. They must sometimes put on powder and paint, as well as false hair and beards. And each actor has what is called a "make-up box," consisting of many things which enable him to make himself up to look like some one else.

"This is how it happened," went on Mr. Weldon. "Your car was parked next to that of Mr. Portnay. I remember seeing that as I rode about taking part in the picture. He has the same make and model car that you have.

"During the cowboy race Mr. Portnay happened to want something from his make-up box. I heard him tell Lewis to go and get it. I was sitting on my horse near Mr. Portnay when Lewis came back with a box such as you describe. At first it looked a good bit like Mr. Portnay's make-up chest,

but our leading man knew right away that it wasn't.

"Lewis, by mistake, had gone to your car and taken your box of albums in place of Portnay's make-up box. Portnay laughed at the mistake, and sent Lewis back to get the right box.

"Now, in all probability, what happened was this. Instead of putting the box of albums back in your car, Lewis put it in Mr. Portnay's car and also took from that car the make-up box. He left your box in Mr. Portnay's car and now our leading man has gone away with it. That's what happened to your albums, I feel sure. No one took them purposely."

"Yes, it must have happened as you say," agreed Mr. Martin. "I'm glad to learn the books weren't stolen."

"But how can we get them back?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"The albums aren't ours—we are carrying them for a neighbor, Mr. James Cardwell," explained Janet primly.

"Yes, that's it," said the little Curlytop girl's father.

The cowboy actor looked at his watch and

seemed to be trying to calculate something in his mind.

"We're to take more scenes on location, as we call it, to-morrow," he said.

"Do you mean here?" asked Mr. Martin. "We planned to go on, but if it means getting back the albums we can stay."

"No, not here," answered Mr. Weldon. "Our next scenes will be taken at Cub Mountain, about fifty miles from here."

"I know where Cub Mountain is," said Mr. Martin. "I've been there, but I didn't intend visiting it on this tour. You see, we are touring around for our summer vacation," he added.

"I see," remarked Ned Weldon. "Well, Mr. Portnay and the rest of the company, or at least most of us, will be at Cub Mountain this time to-morrow, or a little earlier. We are taking scenes about a log cabin on the mountain. If you are there you can very likely see Mr. Portnay and get back from him your box which his man took in mistake for the make-up chest."

"Couldn't we catch Mr. Portnay before then?" asked Mr. Martin. "I mean, couldn't we trail after him now and come up

with him somewhere before he reaches Cub Mountain?"

"You might try," said the man who played the part of a cowboy. "He is going through Midvale, which is about halfway there. Probably he'll stop in Midvale all night. He'll be very sorry this has happened, and he'll be glad to give you back your box."

"Thank you," replied Mr. Martin. "Then I think the best thing for us to do is to take the trail after this Mr. Portnay. I can get back the albums without having to worry Mr. Cardwell about them. Come on, children!"

"Yes, I's comin'," murmured Trouble.

Into the auto scrambled the Curlytops and Trouble. Mrs. Martin took her place beside her husband, and, waving a farewell to the cowboy actor, they started on the trail of Mr. Portnay.

The green meadow by the white bridge was now almost deserted. The curious ones from the city of Cresco had left, and so had the moving picture people, with the exception of the actor who had solved the mystery of the disappearance of the albums.

"Well, we are having rather an exciting

start of our tour," laughed Mrs. Martin, as the auto rolled along the smooth road. "First we meet these interesting moving picture people, and then we have to chase after them. It's very exciting."

"It's lots of fun!" laughed Janet.

"I hope we see some more cowboy races," remarked Ted.

They rode on for several miles, and as they went slowly around a bend in the road, Trouble called out:

"Look! Look! Look at the monkey!"

CHAPTER VIII

OFF AGAIN

TROUBLE MARTIN was not given to calling out alarms like this; so, at first thought, his mother imagined he was playing some sort of joke.

"William, you mustn't say such things!" she exclaimed, with a little laugh, giving him a playful shake. "There aren't any monkeys in these woods." Just then they were slowly passing along a road over which the branches of big trees arched.

"You didn't see any monkey!" cried Ted. "If you saw anything it was one of your 'nelfifunts,' Trouble."

"I did see a monkey!" insisted the little fellow. "There he is now. He's swinging in a tree!" and he pointed ahead.

Mr. Martin was now running the auto very slowly, for there was a bad place in the road where it had been dug up. So there

was plenty of time for them all to look where Trouble pointed with his chubby finger. Jan, the first to see something, cried:

"It is a monkey! Oh, look! He's hanging by his tail from a tree!"

Then they all saw it, and as Mr. Martin stopped the machine just beneath the swaying monkey, Mrs. Martin exclaimed:

"What in the world does it mean? Trouble, I beg your pardon! You were right, after all! I thought you were fooling."

"He's my monkey!" declared the little fellow. "I saw him first! He's mine!"

"If you can get him!" chuckled Ted. "But I guess he's going to stay up there out of reach."

"How do you suppose a monkey comes to be in these woods?" asked Mrs. Martin of her husband. "Could it have escaped from a circus?"

"There's nellifunts in a circus," announced Trouble, getting back to his favorite subject.

"Yes, this little chap might have come from a circus," said Mr. Martin, with a smile, as he looked up at the monkey, now swinging above his head. "Or from some

house. Some people have monkeys for pets."

"Maybe it belongs to the moving pictures!" exclaimed Ted. "They have a lot of animals in the pictures."

"I don't believe it was with Mr. Portnay's company," Mrs. Martin remarked. "We didn't see any such animals there. But what are we going to do about this one?"

"Guess we'll have to leave him where he is—up in the tree," answered her husband. "He can't do much harm, and since it is summer, he won't suffer from the cold. If winter was coming on he'd be a pretty sick monkey—out in the open like this."

"I wish I could have this monkey!" pleaded Trouble. "I like a monkey better'n I do a nellifunt, I guess!"

"Well, that's quite a thing for you to say!" laughed the little fellow's father. "But I'm afraid we can't get you this for a playmate. Hold fast, children, I'm going to start."

As he was about to let in the clutch and send the car ahead, there appeared, running around the bend in the road, an excited Italian organ grinder with his music box. He

was running fast, and when he caught sight of the auto he cried:

"You seena da monk? You seena da monk?"

At this moment the monkey in the tree, still swinging by his tail, began to chatter shrilly. Doubtless he had caught sight of his master and the organ to which tunes the monkey danced. And as the monkey chattered the Italian looked up, catching sight of his pet.

"Ah, da monk! My leetle monk!" he exclaimed, and then he talked in his own language. After which he again spoke English, saying: "Come down, Mickey! Come down to papa!"

The children laughed at this, and the Italian joined them in the mirth.

"He gooda da monk, but he run away," explained the man. "Da string, she break, Mickey go 'way. Come down! Come down!" he begged, holding out his cap. "Come to papa!"

But the monkey did not appear to want to come down. It turned right side up, no longer swinging by its tail, but sitting on a branch.

"If you had some peanuts he'd come down

for those," suggested Ted, searching through his pockets, hoping to find a stray "goober."

"Mickey lika da peanut, but Mickey lika da banan mooch better," said the Italian. "If I hada da banan, down queek he come."

"I have a banana," said Mrs. Martin. "I bought some after we left the moving picture place, and the children didn't eat all of them. Here's a banana for Mickey," she added, handing to the Italian organ grinder one of the yellow fruits.

"T'ank you," murmured the man. Then, peeling the banana, he bit off a little end of it and held the remainder out so the monkey could see it. "I no fool you," the man murmured to his pet. "Dese banana, he good! See, I eat some of heem!"

Again he took a nibble as if to prove to the watching monkey that the fruit was real and good. And, seeing this, the monkey gave another chatter and then began to climb down the tree. Once he had made up his mind to descend, he lost little time, and he was soon perched on the organ eating the banana while his master fastened to the collar the little animal wore, the end of the

string from which Mickey had broken loose.

"Now you be da good monk and come weeth papa!" said the organ grinder, at which the Curlytops laughed again, the Italian joining in.

"Mother, isn't it funny for him to call himself the monkey's papa?" whispered Jan.

"Rather funny, yes," admitted her mother. "But the Italians are like that."

"I t'ank you for catcha da monk," said the Italian, taking off his hat and bowing to Mrs. Martin, as Mickey finished the banana. "Mebby I never no get heem if so dat he not smell da banana."

"I'm glad I had one to tempt him down with," replied the mother of the Curlytops, with a smile.

"Does your monkey act in moving pictures?" asked Ted, as the traveler got ready to move along.

"Da movie pitcher—no—no!" cried the Italian. "Mickey he only hand-organ monk—no movie da pitcher monk! Goo'-by! T'ank you!"

"Good-by!" echoed the Curlytops and the others.

Then Mr. Martin started his car along the road while the Italian, glad that he had recovered his pet which had run away from him, went in the other direction.

"Well, another adventure on our tour," laughed Mrs. Martin. "I couldn't imagine what Trouble meant when he called out about a monkey in the tree."

"Neither could I," said the little fellow's father. "I thought he was fooling."

"We'll have to pay more attention to Trouble after this," said Ted.

"Next time he may see a bear!" laughed Jan.

"Don't like bears!" murmured the little fellow, who was getting sleepy. "Like nelli-funts an' monkeys, but not bears."

"Well, I don't believe we are likely to meet any bears," said Mr. Martin. "What I would like to meet, though, is that moving picture actor with the Cardwell albums."

"We'll find him at the hotel in Midvale and get the albums back," said his wife.

"I hope so," her husband answered.

They were now on their way again. Since Mr. Martin had made no special plans for their touring vacation, he and his wife decided that it would be as well to stop in Mid.

vale for the night, and go on in the morning, as it would be to try to reach some more distant place.

"Will we sleep in the tent at Midvale?" asked Ted, when signs along the road showed the Curlytops that they were entering that small city.

"No, I think we'll go to the hotel," replied Mr. Martin. "We have to stop at the hotel, anyhow, to catch this movie actor, so we may as well stay all night."

"It would be more fun in the tent," urged Ted.

"Heaps more fun," agreed his sister.

"Oh, we'll have enough of tent life before we finish this tour, children," laughed Mrs. Martin.

They reached the Midvale hotel about five o'clock that afternoon. Mr. Martin told his family to remain in the car until he went in to make sure they could get rooms. He came out a little later and there was a look of disappointment on his face.

"Can't they take us in for the night?" asked his wife.

"Yes, we can stay here. But Mr. Portnay isn't here. I can't get the albums from him."

“Not here? Then, where is he?” asked Mrs. Martin.

“He stopped here, but has gone on,” her husband answered. “He has gone on to Cub Mountain, and, I suppose, has the box of albums in his car with him. Perhaps he doesn’t know about them, and they may get lost. I wish he had stayed here until I came!”

CHAPTER IX

AT THE FARM

WHILE the young Curlytops did not think much about the missing albums, they could see that their father was worried because he had not got them back from Mr. Portnay. And anything that worried their father and mother also worried Ted and Janet.

For they could see that Mr. Martin was bothered by the failure to meet the moving picture actor and get back from him the box his man had taken by mistake, thinking it contained false hair, false beards and make-up paint.

"What are you going to do?" Mrs. Martin asked her husband.

"I hardly know," was his answer.

"Can't you telephone or telegraph on ahead to Cub Mountain and ask him to wait for us, or to leave the box of albums where we can get it when we arrive there tomorrow?" Mrs. Martin asked.

"I might do that if I knew where to send a telegram or where to telephone to Mr. Portnay," answered her husband. "That's what I should have done here—sent a telegram to that actor at this hotel. He would have received it and have left the box here for me. But I didn't think of that; so he has gone on, taking my box with him. Very likely, he doesn't even know he has it; he is so busy making this picture."

"You say you can't reach him at Cub Mountain?" Mrs. Martin inquired.

"No, the people at this hotel say Cub Mountain is only a small settlement, and that there isn't even a hotel there. If the moving picture company doesn't set up a camp, Mr. Portnay will probably stop with some friends or in a private boarding house. There may be telephones in some houses or cabins at Cub Mountain, but there is no telegraph station there. The only thing to do will be to go on there."

"Now?" asked Ted, who was getting hungry and who looked at the Midvale hotel with longing eyes.

"Oh, no, we won't go on now," replied his father. "We'll stay here for the night and travel on to Cub Mountain in the morning."

The roads aren't any too good. I want to travel them by daylight. Well, you may as well get out and come in," he told his wife and children.

While Mrs. Martin was signing her name to the hotel register, she listened to her husband talking to the clerk about the moving picture actor.

"Yes, he was here," the clerk said; "he and a number of his company. But the crowd stayed only to eat and then went on. I heard one of them say they had a lot of scenes to take at Cub Mountain, and they wanted to start the work early in the morning."

"Did you see Mr. Portnay have a reddish brown box, about so large?" inquired Mr. Martin, showing the size of the little chest containing the albums.

"No, he didn't bring in any baggage," was the answer.

"Then it's probably still in his car," said the Curlytops' father. "I hope I can get it back to-morrow."

They went up to their rooms, Ted and his father having one, with two beds in it, while Mrs. Martin took Janet and Trouble in with her.

"Better get ready to eat, children," suggested their father, as he noticed Ted and Janet looking from the windows out across the country, for Midvale was on the side of a hill from which a good view could be had.

Mrs. Martin washed Trouble, and put clean clothes on him from the supply carried in the valises, and thus he was first ready to go down to the dining room. When neither his father nor his mother noticed him he wandered out into the hall.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin were ready to go down, and so were Ted and Janet, when Trouble's mother looked around for him.

"Where's William?" she asked.

"I saw him go out into the hall," answered Ted. "I'll get him."

As he opened the door to go into the hall, the others following, they heard the tinkle of broken glass, and then, directly afterward, a bell began to ring.

Instantly, throughout the hotel, which was not a very large one, there was a great commotion. The elevator shot up to the floor where the Martin family stood and the colored boy in the cage cried:

"Come on! Git in! Ah'll take yo' all down 'fore de place burns!"

“Before the place burns? What do you mean?” asked Mr. Martin. “The hotel isn’t burning!”

“Yes, ’tis!” cried the colored elevator lad, his eyes big with fright. “Doan yo’ all hear de ’larm!”

“I do hear a bell ringing!” exclaimed Mrs. Martin.

There was more commotion in the hotel, and several guests began running from their rooms, carrying bags and clothing. It began to look as if there was a fire, but there was no appearance of flames, nor could Mrs. Martin smell smoke.

Then Ted exclaimed:

“It was Trouble! He sent in a false alarm! Trouble pulled the fire alarm! Look!”

He pointed to the little fellow who was climbing down from a chair in the hall. The chair was some distance down the corridor, and near a small red box fast to the wall.

In a moment Mr. Martin understood. He had seen these fire signal stations in various places about the hotel. In front of a small iron box was a sheet of glass, and hanging down from the box by a chain was a little iron hammer. Directions on the box said

to break the glass with the hammer and pull down the hook inside, which could only be reached when the glass was smashed.

"Trouble smashed the glass and pulled the hook!" cried Ted.

"I heard some glass break," added Janet.

Mr. Martin ran down the hall to the small boy, who stood near the chair. On the carpet were pieces of shattered glass.

"Trouble, did you do this?" cried his father.

"I—now—I jist hit the glass a little wif de hammer and it did break," confessed William. "Den I pulled on de button hook!"

"Well, you did more than that!" exclaimed his father, with a grim laugh. "You sent in the alarm when you pulled the hook. There's no danger, my friends!" he called to the guests who were crowding out into the corridor. "There's no fire. It was a false alarm! I shall have to punish my little boy for breaking the glass and sending in a false alarm."

"Oh, don't punish him!" murmured a lady, who in running from her room had caught up a canary bird in a cage and a pair

of old slippers. She hardly knew what she was doing in the excitement.

"No, he didn't mean to do it," said a man. Trouble, by this time, knew he had done something dreadful, and was crying behind his mother's skirts.

Luckily, the alarm Trouble caused to be sent in was only a private one, just in the hotel itself. It did not bring the Midvale fire department out, for word went to the clerk downstairs that there was no danger and he did not call out the engines or hook and ladder apparatus.

So, after all, little harm was done, except to cause some excitement and fright among the hotel guests. But this soon passed, and when the Martins went to the dining room a little later, every one looked at Trouble as a guest of some importance.

"But don't ever do it again!" his mother warned him.

"No'm, I won't," he promised.

The broken glass was swept up by one of the chambermaids, and a new sheet put in front of the hook in the fire alarm box.

That evening after dinner Mr. Martin took his family to the moving picture theater near the hotel. You can imagine how

surprised they were when one of the pictures proved to have been made by Mr. Portnay's company, and he himself took a large part in it.

There, on the screen, the children saw the very man they had watched act in the green meadow that morning. Ned Weldon, the cowboy actor with whom the children had talked, was in it, too. Of course these were not the scenes they had watched being filmed, for that picture was far from being finished. But it was very exciting to see the people they had so recently watched.

"I wish Portnay were here in person instead of only in the movies," remarked Mr. Martin, as they left the theater. "I'd ask him for those rare albums. But I suppose we shall have to wait until we meet him at Cub Mountain."

The next morning, after a quiet night, the Curlytops resumed their tour, and made a safe trip to Cub Mountain, on which was a small country settlement. The scenery was just wild enough to be the right background for moving pictures.

"Where are you going to inquire about Mr. Portnay?" asked Mrs. Martin, as her husband stopped his car on what appeared

to be the only, as well as the main, street of the village.

"Right here in the post-office," he answered, for it was in front of the post-office that they had stopped. "They'll know here about the moving picture people, I guess."

But again Mr. Martin was doomed to disappointment. For when he inquired of the postmaster that official said:

"Yes, there was a company of movie people here. But that was early this morning—about three hours ago, I reckon."

"Have they left?" asked Mr. Martin, wishing he had made an earlier start.

"Yes, they went on to the Dawson Farm. They're going to film some scenes there, so I heard 'em say."

"Where is the Dawson Farm?" asked Mr. Martin.

"About ten miles from here. Keep straight on and you can't miss it. It's a big place—old-fashioned white farmhouse, red barns, and all that. Just the thing for movies, I reckon."

"Thank you, I'll go there," said Mr. Martin, and when he rejoined his family he said to his wife:

"This Portnay actor keeps me on the

jump. I wish he'd stay in one place long enough for me to get back those albums."

"You'll very likely catch him at the farm," said Mrs. Martin. "But perhaps it would be as well to telephone from here and say you are coming."

"Yes, I'll do that," the Curlytops' father said.

He went back into the post-office, where he had noticed a telephone on the wall. But when he asked if he could use it to send a message to the Dawson Farm the postmaster smiled and said:

"Well, you're welcome to use it as far as I'm concerned, but you can't get Dawson's Farm on that machine."

"Haven't they a telephone?" Mr. Martin wanted to know.

"Oh, yes, they have a 'phone. But this one here is out of order and it won't work. I've sent for a feller to fix it, but he hasn't come."

"Is there another telephone here?" asked Mr. Martin.

"No, this is the only one, and this is out of order. I'm sorry!"

"I'm sorry, too," Mr. Martin answered. "I'd like to get a message through to Daw-

son's Farm, so Mr. Portnay won't again leave and take my box with him."

However, there was nothing to do but to hurry on to the farm as fast as they could go. The postmaster explained that the place was a real farm, not one for moving picture purposes, though scenes were frequently filmed there, as many farm animals were ready to be photographed as a background for the actors and actresses.

"It's just like a game, isn't it, Daddy?" said Teddy.

"Like hide-and-seek," added Janet, giggling.

"Maybe," agreed Mr. Martin. "But I don't like playing the game very much."

Down off Cub Mountain drove Mr. Martin with his auto load of family, and after rather a bumpy trip over rough roads he turned onto a firm, smooth highway and soon they read a sign which said it was but one mile to Dawson's Farm.

"There it is!" cried Ted, a few minutes later, as they made a turn in the road. Before them lay the big farm and buildings spoken of by the Cub Mountain postmaster. And, as the Martins drew nearer, Janet cried:

“I see the movie people! There they are!”

She pointed to a number of persons, some on horses and others on foot, who were, undoubtedly, some of the same ones they had watched in the green meadow.

“Now I’ll get those albums back,” said Mr. Martin.

CHAPTER X

TROUBLE'S DANGER

"THIS is a dandy place!" exclaimed Ted, as his father guided the auto into a lane that led from the main road up to the group of farm buildings.

"Indeed it is," agreed Mrs. Martin. "I should like to spend part of our vacation here, if they would let us."

"Look at the cows! Look at the cows!" cried Trouble, pointing to a herd of fine animals in a distant pasture.

"And what a lot of horses, too," added Janet.

Mr. Martin, however, was most interested in the company of moving picture players clustered around one of the buildings. He was looking for a sight of Harry Portnay who, by mistake, had taken the box of the Cardwell albums.

As the auto came to a slow stop not far

from the group of movie folk who were being filmed in some scene, a man on a horse rode up to the car.

"How do you do, Mr. Martin!" he said.

"Oh, it's Mr. Weldon!" exclaimed the father of the Curlytops, as he recognized the movie cowboy actor who had first given the information about Mr. Portnay's man taking the album box by mistake.

"Yes, I'm here again," was the answer. "I just got my costume on. They're going to shoot me and some of the other boys pretty soon."

"Shoot you!" cried Ted, in surprise.

"Oh, I forgot—you youngsters don't know all the movie terms," laughed Mr. Weldon. "I mean they're going to aim the moving picture cameras at us and 'shoot' us that way—not with guns!"

"Oh!" murmured Ted, laughing with the actor. "Well, I'm glad they aren't going to shoot you with guns."

"They shoot nellifunts with guns!" broke in Trouble. "But if I had a nellifunt I wouldn't let 'em shoot him. And we saw a monkey, we did!"

"My, that's a fine thing to see!" chuckled Mr. Weldon. "But I suppose you saw Mr.

Portnay and got back your box of valuable hot cross buns, didn't you?"

"It wasn't hot cross buns!" laughed Janet, for this actor had a jolly way about him. "It was *albums*—albums for pictures, you know."

"Ah, yes, so it was! Albums!" said Mr. Weldon, with a smile. "I was just joking, you know. But I suppose you got them back?" he said to Mr. Martin.

"No, I didn't," was the answer. "That's why I came on here after them. I missed Mr. Portnay in Midvale."

"That's too bad," returned the actor. "You're out of luck again."

"What do you mean?" inquired Mrs. Martin.

"Why, I mean Mr. Portnay isn't here."

"Not here!" echoed Jan's father. "Why, I thought this was his moving picture company and that he'd surely be here. The postmaster at Cub Mountain told me he had come on here."

"Some of us did after the scenes there were taken," explained the actor cowboy. "But Mr. Portnay didn't. He isn't in these pictures that are going to be taken at the farm. Or, at least, he doesn't come in until

later. So, while this is his company, or the company of which he is the star, he isn't needed just now; so he went back to New York. He left just a little while ago to take the train."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin. "It seems we are never going to catch up with that man."

"It is rather unfortunate," said her husband. "But perhaps he left my box here," he went on to Mr. Weldon. "He wouldn't take that back to New York with him."

"No, he wouldn't if he knew what it was," admitted the movie actor. "But he leaves all such matters to his helper, Jim Lewis. And Jim probably packed your box with the other baggage belonging to Mr. Portnay and shipped it to New York."

"Is there any one here I could ask if the box has been left?" inquired Mr. Martin.

"Oh, yes; our director, Tony Birch. He'd know if any one would," said Mr. Weldon. "There he is over by the chicken houses. They're going to take a picture of Miss Marcell feeding the hens, I believe."

"Is Miss Marcell the young lady who jumped into the river?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Yes, the same one. She's our leading lady as Mr. Portnay is our leading man."

"You stay here with the children, my dear," said Mr. Martin to his wife, "and I'll go and ask Mr. Birch if he knows anything of my box of albums that Mr. Portnay took. I'll be right back."

The Curlytops watched their father cross a field and approach a group of movie folk who were being filmed in some scene that had to do with the fowls, of which there were a large number on the Dawson Farm. From where they sat in the auto the Curlytops and their mother could see and hear something of what went on. Trouble had gotten down out of the car and was playing with a little puppy at one side, so he was accounted for for the time being.

As Mr. Martin approached the scene at the chicken houses he could see Miss Marcell tossing grain to the hens and roosters. In front of her, and to one side of a movie camera, was a man with a megaphone in his hands. Through this he called directions to the actress as the man at the camera ground the crank.

"Not so fast! Not so fast!" cried Tony Birch, for it was the director who was man-

aging matters. "Don't throw the chickens corn so fast, Miss Marcell! You'll make them have indigestion. Do it slowly, as if you were a girl on a farm."

"All right," was the smiling answer, and she began to scatter fewer grains.

"Oh, you'll have to give them more than that or they'll think you're stingy!" exclaimed the director. "There—that's better. Shoot!" he called to the camera man, and the latter, who had ceased grinding out the film while the actress was being corrected, began again.

When the scene was over Mr. Martin asked the director:

"Did Mr. Portnay leave behind him a red box belonging to me? He took it by mistake yesterday when you were at Cresco."

The director thought for a moment and answered:

"No, I am sorry to say he didn't. Mr. Portnay had to leave in a hurry to get back to New York to arrange some matters, and I suppose he didn't think of your box."

"It may be that he doesn't even know he has it," explained Mr. Martin. "His man Jim Lewis took it by mistake for a make-up box."

"Oh, I see. Um—yes. Well, I tell you the best thing to do. Mr. Portnay will join us here in about a week. He'll be in New York during that time. I can give you his address and you can write or telegraph and ask him to be sure and bring your box back with you."

"Thank you. But won't he return for a week?" asked Mr. Martin.

"No. We have a number of scenes to film here at the farm, and we are going to stay for a week. They are scenes in which Mr. Portnay has no part, so he isn't needed here. But when he comes back he can bring your box."

"I suppose that is the best I can do," said Mr. Martin, a bit disappointed. "But I am touring around with my family. I didn't count on staying here a week."

"It's a good place to stay," urged Mr. Birch, with a smile. "We movie people have engaged board here, and there is room for more. Why don't you stay with your family? You'll see some interesting sights. We're going to film a big part of the picture here. And Dawson's Farm is a good place for a vacation."

"So my wife said," remarked Mr. Martin.

"Well, I'll talk to her about it. The only way to get back those albums seems to be to get in touch with Mr. Portnay personally, and I can best do that by staying here. The children ought to like it," he murmured, as he looked over the big, pleasant farm.

"Why, certainly! By all means, stay!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, when told of the situation. "We don't have to travel on until we get ready."

"No," agreed her husband. "And I certainly must get those albums back or there will be trouble in the Cardwell family. Well, I guess the best thing to do is to stay."

"Oh, goodie!" cried Janet, when she heard this.

"Hurray!" shouted Ted.

"Will they be any nellifunts?" asked Trouble.

"No. But there are lots of other animals," his mother said. "But will they keep us here?" she asked her husband. "It's a delightful place, but with all these movie folk here, will there be room for us?"

"Mr. Birch said so. But we can soon make sure of it," said the father of the Curlytops.

Mr. Dawson, who owned and ran the big

farm, was a jolly kind of man. He was proud of his place, and one reason he consented to let the movie people take scenes of it was so that other persons, all over the country, would see what a fine farm his was.

"They're going to show a picture of me, too," said Mr. Dawson to Mr. Martin. "And the name 'Dawson's Farm' is to go in some of the titles. We farmers ought to make the world proud of us, and by showing movies of a big farm like this city folks will think more of the man who tills the soil."

"I agree with you," said Mr. Martin. "But what about keeping us here?"

"Plenty of room! Plenty!" laughed Mr. Dawson heartily. "And you say you have two children?"

"Three," answered their father.

"Three! So much the better! I love children! Bring 'em in! My wife will want to see them! She loves children, too!"

So it was settled that the Martin family was to remain at Dawson's Farm until Mr. Portnay came from New York, or else shipped back the box of albums. Mr. Dawson kept quite an establishment, having a number of hired men and servants, and he took the Curlytops and their family right

into his own house. The movie people "camped" out by themselves in a separate building. They would do their own cooking and look after themselves. But the Martins would eat with the Dawson family.

"Oh, what a lot of fun we can have here!" cried Jan, after she and her brothers had put on "old clothes" and were romping about. Mr. Martin had gone to write a letter to Mr. Portnay which that actor would receive in New York. Mrs. Martin was talking to Mrs. Dawson, who was a kind, motherly soul with no children of her own.

"I know just how you feel, losing that album with those little girls' pictures in it," she said. "It's worse than if it was your own, belonging to some one else that way."

"Yes, that's what Mr. Martin thinks," said his wife. "Well, we hope we'll get it back."

"I hope so, too. Now I want the children to have a good time. Let them do just as they please."

"Well, I can't quite do that," replied Mrs. Martin, with a smile. "Though they'll pretty nearly do that, anyhow," she added.

If she could have seen Janet and Ted then she would have had reason to add to

this, for the Curlytops were climbing an apple tree, where Ted had seen some fruit that looked nearly ripe.

"I'll climb up and shake some down to you, Jan," he had said.

"You needn't, thank you," laughed Janet. "I can climb a tree as well as you can!"

"You can not!" declared her brother.

"I can so! I'll show you!"

Toward the tree ran the Curlytops, and while they were climbing it Trouble was doing something else. He had wandered off by himself, though Mrs. Martin had told Jan and Ted to look after him. Going down a path that led away from the orchard, he came to a field in which was pastured an old boar, a savage pig with long, curving tusks—teeth that stuck out like the tusks of an elephant.

The sight of these tusks, small as they were, made Trouble think the boar might be a small animal of the kind he was so interested in.

"Oh, it's a little nellifunt! It's a little nellifunt!" cried Trouble. "I'm going in an' give him a peanut!" for he had asked his mother to buy him some nuts just before reaching Dawson's Farm and he had a few

of the goobers left. "I give you peanut, little nellifunt!" cried Trouble, as he crawled in between two strands of the prickly wire fence. His waist caught and was torn a little, but he didn't mind that.

The boar gave a grunt as he saw Trouble enter the field. The boar wasn't used to this. He didn't very often have company, especially small boys. And the boar was savage—he didn't like company of any kind! The only things he was afraid of were dogs and a man with a sharp pitchfork or a big stick.

So, as soon as Trouble crawled through the fence, the savage boar, with loud grunts, made a rush for the little fellow.

CHAPTER XI

FUNNY FISH

WHEN the boar, with deep grunts, started toward Trouble, the little boy saw that he had made a mistake. It wasn't a little "nellifunt" at all.

" 'Cause he didn't have any trunk—that's how I knew he wasn't a nellifunt," Trouble explained to his mother afterward. "He had big teeth, like a little nellifunt, but he didn't have any trunk."

As soon as he had discovered it wasn't a small elephant in the field, Trouble began to be afraid. He didn't exactly know what sort of animal this might be. Dimly he remembered something about pigs on his grandfather's farm. But those pigs were cute little pink ones in a pen with their big, fat mother pig. The mother pig lay on her side and grunted. The little pigs ran around squealing. None of them acted as did this savage boar.

For that reason Trouble didn't know exactly what to make of this. He held out in his hand some of the peanuts he had taken from his pocket. In the distance Trouble could hear the shouts of Jan and Ted as they scrambled up the apple tree. But more clearly than anything Trouble heard the grunts of the boar as it came nearer and nearer.

"I—I don't like you! Go on 'way!" called Trouble, after a second of watching this big, ugly animal. "Go 'way!"

But the boar still came forward. He was used to having his own way except when a man with a dog or a pitchfork came in the field. More than once this boar had chased boys and girls who, unthinkingly, had wandered to this part of Mr. Dawson's farm. Mr. Dawson always warned people about going into the field where the boar was, but he had been so busy with the movie folk that he forgot about it this time.

Suddenly the boar gave such a loud grunt of rage, ending with such a squeal, that Trouble was badly frightened. The little fellow began to cry. He wished he hadn't come into the field.

The cry of their little brother reached the

ears of Ted and Jan in the tree. They had just begun to pick some of the fruit, but when they heard Trouble they looked toward him. And what Ted saw made him drop an apple after he had taken one bite. He scrambled down out of the tree shouting:

“I’m coming, Trouble! I’m coming! I won’t let the pig bite you!”

For Ted knew that boars are very savage when once roused.

“I’m coming, too!” cried Jan.

She tried to scramble down out of the tree, but slipped when on the lowest limb and fell to the ground. Luckily she fell in a place where the grass was long and thick, so she wasn’t hurt. She was merely jarred a bit, and after getting back her breath she ran toward the fence, through which Ted was crawling to reach Trouble.

By this time the boar was close to the little fellow. Long before this the savage pig would have rushed at the small boy, but, truth to tell, the way Trouble stood there, crying, puzzled the boar. And when animals are puzzled they don’t act as quickly as when they know just what is going on.

However, neither Ted nor Janet would have reached Trouble in time to save him.

For as Ted got through the barbed wire fence, which alone prevented the boar from getting out of the pasture, there was a thud and rush of feet and a voice shouted:

“I’ll get him! Stand still, little boy!”

The rush of feet were the galloping hoofs of a horse. And the voice was that of Mr. Weldon, the movie actor. He rushed his steed toward the fence, called to his mount, and, in another moment, the horse sprang cleanly over the fence and rushed on toward the boar. But more particularly Mr. Weldon guided his steed toward Trouble.

As the little fellow turned to see whence came the pounding of hoofs and the cheery call of the man, the rider leaned from the saddle and in one hand picked up small William, swinging him up in front and to safety. All the while the horse was going at top speed.

In another moment Mr. Weldon had leaped his animal back over the fence, and the boar was left alone in the field, doubtless wondering, in his small brain, what had become of that boy he was going to gash with his tusks.

“There you are, little man!” said Mr. Weldon, as he brought his horse to a slow

pace and set William on the ground near Ted, who had crawled back through the fence. "I wouldn't go in that field again, if I were you."

"I should say not!" cried Ted, who had been surprised with the quickness of it all. "What made you go in there, Trouble?"

"I—now—I thought he was a little nelli-funt, an' I was going to give him peanuts!" sobbed the little chap, for he wasn't yet over his fright.

"Oh, elephant! He's crazy about elephants!" explained Jan, who came up just then. "I guess he thought the big teeth on that pig were elephant's teeth."

"I suppose so," said Mr. Weldon. "But keep watch of him, so he doesn't go in there again."

"Yes, we will," promised Ted.

"And thank you for saving Trouble," added Jan.

"Oh, yes, thank you!" murmured Ted, who had been so taken up with admiring Mr. Weldon's horse and the manner in which the cowboy made his steed jump the fence that he had little room to think of his manners.

"That's all right," said the movie man,

with a smile. "We have to do harder things than that when we're on the 'lot.' Well, I'll see you later," and he rode back to join the others, for the camera men were getting ready to film certain scenes down near one of the barns.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin also thanked Mr. Weldon that night, after they had heard how he had gotten Trouble out of danger. The Curlytops and their friends were now well settled at the farm, where they would remain about a week.

"Though if Mr. Portnay sends back that box of albums any sooner, we might travel on," said Mr. Martin.

"Oh, let's stay here!" pleaded Jan. "It's lovely here!"

"We can have lots of fun," added Ted.

"Well, since we started this tour mainly to give you children a good vacation time, and since you like it here, we might as well stay for a while," said their father.

"But you must take better care of Trouble," their mother warned them. "I shan't feel easy in my mind unless you promise to watch him all the while he is with you. With these movie folk here at the farm

there is so much going on that Trouble may easily get into danger."

"We'll take good care of him," promised Jan.

"I'll take him with me wherever I go," said Ted.

"Well, then I'll feel better about it," said Mrs. Martin.

It was because of his promise that the next day, when Ted and Janet decided to go fishing, Ted called:

"Come on, Trouble! You may come with us!"

"Oh, I like fishin'!" declared the little boy. "I'm going to catch a big one."

"I'll leave him to sit on the bank near you," whispered Ted to his sister, "and I'll go off a little way by myself. I never can catch any big fish if I'm near him, for he'll be pulling his hook in all the while to see if he has a bite."

"I know he will," said Janet. "I'll take care of him while you fish."

Not far from the farmhouse was a stream winding in and out among a grove of trees. In some places there were deep pools and eddies where, some of the farmhands said, large fish could be caught.

Ted picked out what he thought was a good spot and, posting Jan and Trouble a little way from it, cast in his hook.

He was sitting on a grassy bank near one of the deep pools spoken of by some of the farm hired men. Here the water had worn out a place in the shore, making what is called an eddy—a quiet, swirling bit of the stream where big fish love to swim.

Ted had not been fishing long when he felt that he had a bite.

“Oh, I’ve got a big one!” he called to Jan, who was busy keeping Trouble from falling into the stream. “I’ve got a whopper! Look, Jan!”

He pulled up. Something black went sailing through the air over his head. But no sooner had it landed than Ted found he had hooked an old rubber boot!

“Oh, jinks!” he cried in disgust. “Look at that!”

“That’s a funny fish!” laughed Jan.

“Well, I’ll get a real one this time!” declared her brother.

In he cast again. There came a gentle tug on his line.

“Now I’ve got a bite!” he shouted. Again

he pulled up. Something flopped on the grass behind him.

But it was only an old shoe!

“Say, what’s the matter here, anyhow?” demanded Ted.

“Ha! Ha!” laughed his sister. “What funny fish!”

“Look at Ted’s funny fish!” chuckled Trouble.



TED FOUND HE HAD HOOKED AN OLD RUBBER BOOT.

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CHAPTER XII

FLIP-FLOPS

PULLING up a rubber boot in place of a fish wasn't strange for the first time, since Ted had before this done much the same thing when out for a day's sport. But when, the second time, he hooked an old shoe, it was too much!

If he had been fishing with some of the Cresco lads he would have suspected a trick, for often one of them would slip away, reach for a chum's hook in a spot where he couldn't be observed, and fasten on the hook some queer object, putting it softly back into the water again and waiting for the fun that was sure to follow.

But Ted knew none of his chums were with him now, and Janet, though she sometimes played tricks, was too far away, looking after Trouble, to have put the boot and shoe on his hook.

"Of course I might have picked them up off the bottom, but I don't believe it," thought the Curlytop lad. "I'm going to watch."

"I got a better fish than yours!" boasted Trouble, holding up a small "sunny," which had rashly nibbled at his hook.

"So you did," admitted Ted. "But I'll get a big fish soon."

"That was *big* enough!" laughed Janet, pointing to the rubber boot, from a hole in the toe of which water was running.

"But it isn't real," said Ted ruefully. "Just you wait!"

When Janet went back to the comfortable place she had picked out for herself and William, Ted again took his position on the jutting-out bank near the deep eddy. Once again he threw in his line, letting out plenty of it. But this time, instead of gazing off at the distant hills, Ted kept watch of his tackle. Presently he saw it begin to move in toward the shore at a place where tall grass and rushes made a secret hiding place.

"That's funny," said Ted to himself. "If a fish was on my hook a fish would move out toward the middle of the brook—not toward the bank." For this is true of fishes. Once

hooked, they try to get into deep water, hoping to get the sharp point out of their mouth.

But Ted's line was being slowly pulled in toward the grass-screened bank, and it wasn't at all as if a fish was hooked.

"It might be a mud turtle," thought the lad. "A turtle would go slow like that—but not a fish. I'll wait and see what happens."

His line was pulled in a little farther toward the bank. There was a movement in the tall grass and the lad felt a tug on his pole as if a fish were nibbling. It was just like the other two "bites" he had.

"Now to see what it is!" thought Ted.

But instead of calling to his sister to look what a big "fish" he had, the lad kept quiet and began to haul in.

Something heavy was on his hook, that was certain. But when he hauled it up out of the water all that met his eyes was—an old rusty tin can!

Janet looked up in time to see it sailing through the air and she cried, as well as she could for her giggles:

"Oh, Teddy! what's the matter with you? More funny fish!"

"It's a trick—that's what it is!" declared

the Curlytop lad. "A trick. Somebody down there in the grass is putting boots and shoes and tin cans on my hook!"

Dropping his pole, Ted made a dash for the clump of tall grass and rushes where he had seen the cautious movements. Before he reached the place there was a commotion there, and out and up leaped a queer little man—a man who shouted and laughed and at once began turning somersaults on the open place a little way back from the edge of the stream.

Backward and forward the queer little man turned somersaults. Then he sprang up in the air, landed on his hands, and bounced back to his feet. With a whoop he turned a "cartwheel," and then rolled over and over in the grass.

"Oh, look! He's doing flip-flops! He's doing flip-flops!" cried Trouble who, with Jan, had risen from his fishing place to look at the funny man. "He's doing flip-flops like the nellifunt man in the circus!"

Indeed, this odd character seemed to have come from a circus, except that he did not have on a gayly colored suit with shining spangles.

As Ted watched the thought came into the

lad's mind that this strange man was the one who had fastened the boot, the shoe and the tin can on the fish hook.

"Whoop-la! That's the way to do it!" cried the man in a jolly voice, as he walked around on his hands. He then very suddenly straightened up. "How's fishing?" he asked, as he walked toward Ted.

"Why, it isn't so very good—not with you around." When Ted said this, which might not be considered very polite, a smile came to his face. One could not help smiling when one looked at the jolly countenance of the "flip-flop man" as Trouble called him.

"Oh, ho! So I spoiled your fishing, did I?" asked the acrobat.

"Somebody did," declared Ted. "That's all I caught." He pointed to the rubber boot, the shoe, and the rusty tin can on the grass.

"Oh, dear! That's too bad! Too bad!" sighed the funny man. "And there's good fish in here, too. I know it, for I've pulled them out. Suppose you try again."

"I will if you'll stay up here and not go down there to put things on my hook," agreed Ted, pointing to the clump of tall

grass near the water's edge, whence the man had come.

"Oh, ho! So you suspect me, do you?" asked the tumbler.

"Yes, I do!" laughed Ted. "Didn't you do it?"

"I'm like George Washington. I must tell the truth," said the man. "I did it. I hope I didn't bother you. It isn't too late to catch some real fish. Come on—throw in again. I'll sit here on the bank and keep as quiet as a little mouse. Did you ever see a little mouse?" he asked Trouble, winking first one eye and then the other at the small boy.

"I—now—I saw a nellifunt," was Trouble's answer.

"Hum! Then you must belong in the circus where I came from," laughed the man.

"Oh, are you from the circus?" asked Jan eagerly.

"I used to act in one—doing flip-flops and other clown work," answered the man. "Now I've joined the movies. I'm Jimmie Tizzy!"

"Oh, are you Jimmie Tizzy?" cried Ted, for well he knew that name, having laughed

more than once at the funny antics of this clown of the movies.

"That's who I am," the man replied, with a laugh.

"You don't look like him," ventured Jan doubtfully.

"That's because I haven't my make-up on, nor dressed as you generally see me," said Mr. Tizzy. "But if you stay around here long enough you'll see me as I really am. I'm going to have a part with Mr. Portnay next week."

"Oh, are you stopping here at the farm, and are you with Mr. Portnay's movie company?" cried Ted.

"That's right!"

"We haven't seen you before, and we're staying at the farm, too," said Jan.

"There are so many of us, it's no wonder you missed me," said Mr. Tizzy. "I really haven't done any acting for the camera since we came here. My part doesn't get filmed until next week. But I wanted to keep in practice, so I came out here to do a few flip-flops. Then I saw you fishing and I thought it would be fun to play a little joke on you. I hid in the deep grass, pulled your hook in with a long stick and fastened the boot on

first. Then I put on the shoe and lastly the tin can. Did you mind it?"

"Oh, no," admitted Ted, with a laugh. "At first it puzzled me. But it's all right. I hope I can catch some real fish now."

"I think you can," said Mr. Tizzy. "I won't play any more jokes."

Ted baited his hook anew and prepared to cast in again, while the funny acrobat sat down on the bank near the Curlytop lad to watch him.

"Come on, Trouble," said Jan, in a low voice. "We'll let Ted catch a big fish for us."

But Trouble didn't want to go. He dragged and held back.

"Wait! Wait!" he begged. "I want to ast him suffin!"

"What is it, little man?" inquired Mr. Tizzy, with a smile. "Do you want me to stand on my head again? I'd better not until your brother catches a fish. But what else do you want to ask me?"

"Can you do flip-flops on a nellifunt's back?" inquired Trouble.

"Yes, I've done that," admitted Mr. Tizzy. "If you'll bring your elephant here I'll flip-flop on his back."

"I hasn't got a nellifunt," admitted the little lad. "But maybe I could find one in the woods. Once I gave a nellifunt peanuts."

"And he's never forgotten it!" laughed Jan. "But come on," she urged her small brother. "Ted wants to fish. Maybe Mr. Tizzy will do some other tricks for you," she added.

"I surely will," promised the acrobat. "I must keep myself in practice ready for the work next week. Now go ahead and fish, Ted."

When it grew quiet, the lad eagerly waited for a nibble, and he was soon rewarded by pulling up a good-sized fish.

"It's a real one this time!" Ted shouted, as the beauty flopped on the grass.

"I must watch him," said Mr. Tizzy. "I may get some ideas from the way he leaps about."

From then on Ted had good luck and caught five fish before it was time to go home. Trouble, also, caught a fair-sized perch, which much delighted him.

"Now for a few more flips and I'll walk back with you," said Mr. Tizzy. "I'm glad to know we're stopping at the same place."

I heard some talk last night about children being at the farm, but I thought they meant movie children."

"Well, we're sort of on the move," explained Ted. "We're touring around for our vacation. But Mr. Portnay took two old photograph albums by mistake, and we're waiting for him to send them back."

"Go on—do a flip-flop!" urged Trouble eagerly. "I like 'em!"

"All right. Here goes, little man!" cried Mr. Tizzy.

He began turning somersaults again, leaping back and forth, doing handsprings and cartwheels on a smooth place in the grass.

"Now watch this!" he cried, and he bent himself in the shape of a hoop by grasping his ankles with his hands. Around and around he rolled, the children laughing in glee until, all at once, Mr. Tizzy disappeared.

Out of sight he vanished, as though the earth had opened and swallowed him!

CHAPTER XIII

TED FALLS OFF

FOR a while the Curlytop children and Trouble thought this sudden vanishing of Mr. Tizzy was one of his tricks—he was so full and bubbling over with them. Ted said afterward he thought the movie man had doubled himself up into as small a ball as possible and was hiding behind a clump of grass.

But when nearly a minute passed and Mr. Tizzy did not come back, the children began to get worried. A trick and a joke might be all right, but this was a little too much!

“Maybe he hurt himself,” suggested Jan.

This very thought was in Ted’s mind, but his sister spoke of it first.

“Let’s look and see where he is,” went on Jan.

“He went down in a hole!” declared Trouble.

Certainly it looked so, and when Ted walked forward, toward the place where he had last seen the acrobat and when Janet and Trouble followed, the Curlytop lad found that what his little brother said was true.

There was a hole in the ground, a rather deep and steep hole with grass growing close to the edge of it. And down in this hole lay the acrobat in a huddled heap.

So still and quiet he was, all doubled up, that Janet felt frightened. She was going to ask Ted if he thought the jolly man might be dead. But Ted suddenly exclaimed:

"I guess he's fainted. I'll get some water and pour it on him."

Ted had once seen his aunt faint, and his mother had dashed water on her face.

Back to the stream ran the boy, and in the can he had fished out he brought back some water. When some of this had been spilled on the face of the man lying in the hole, he opened his eyes and asked rather faintly:

"What happened?"

"You flip-flopped into a hole," answered Ted. "Can you get out or shall I run back to the farm for help?"

"Oh, I guess I'm all right now," was the

answer. "I remember now. I was cart-wheeling around and, all of a sudden, I saw this hole in front of me. Before I could stop myself I rolled into it. I hit my head on a stone, and that's all I remember. But I'm all right now, though I guess I was unconscious for a minute or two."

"We didn't know what had happened to you," remarked Janet.

"Well, it isn't anything to worry about," said the man, as he untangled himself, for his legs and arms were rather mixed up. "I'll be all right in another minute."

He scrambled out of the hole, gave himself a shake to make sure no bones were broken, and then went down to the edge of the little river, where he bathed his head, especially the place that had hit a stone, and drank some water.

"Now I feel better," he announced. "But I guess I won't do any more flip-flops right away."

"What do you think made that hole?" asked Ted, as they stood around the edge, looking down in it, after Mr. Tizzy said he thought they had better start back to the farm.

"Some boys may have dug it for a cave to

play in, or some one may have dug a big stone out of there," said the acrobat. "But if they took a stone out, where it is I can't see," and he looked around in vain for a sight of the boulder. "More likely it was boys at play," he said. "But it was dug some time ago, for the grass has grown all around the edge and the dirt they took out has disappeared."

Glad that nothing more serious had happened, the Curlytops started back toward the group of farm buildings. Ted carried the fish he had caught, and Trouble insisted on bringing home his small sunny and the perch, neither of which were of much account for the kitchen.

"Oh, what a fine fisherman you are, William!" his mother exclaimed, when she saw what he held up for her to admire. "Why, you'll soon be able to catch enough for a whole meal."

"I caught a fish before Ted did," announced the little lad. "He got a rubber boot!"

Mr. and Mrs. Martin laughed at the story of the funny trick played on Ted by the flip-flop man, and a little later that day they met

the actor and talked to him, liking him very much.

While Mr. Martin was waiting for an answer to the letter he had sent to New York, asking Mr. Portnay to return the photograph albums taken by mistake, there was nothing to do save to amuse himself as well as he could at the farm and make the best of matters.

The moving picture actor might ship the box of albums back by express, or he might bring them himself, so Mr. Weldon said.

"Harry Portnay is a queer chap," said the cowboy actor who had leaped his horse over the fence to save Trouble from the ugly boar. "He never does what you think he will. It would be just like him to send a special messenger back with those books, or he may even forget all about them and leave them in his New York office."

"But I have written him a letter about them!" exclaimed Mr. Martin.

"Yes, I know. But he gets a lot of letters every day—all movie stars do—and he may not pay much attention to yours."

"I must get those albums back if I have to go to New York for them myself," declared the father of the Curlytops.

"Oh, I'd like to go to New York!" cried Ted.

"So would I!" added his sister.

"We have made other plans," their mother answered, with a smile. "We are going to tour around and make a stop in Bentville—as soon as we get the albums."

Meanwhile, the only thing to do was to wait, and it was a pleasant waiting, at least for the children. They liked it at the Dawson Farm, for there was much to see and do, especially with the moving picture people there. Every day some scenes were taken—nothing very elaborate or big, because of the absence of the star, but enough to keep the camera men and the actors and actresses busy.

To their delight, the day after the queer fishing trip the children saw Mr. Tizzy do some of his funny tricks in front of the camera. The acrobat said he was all right again after his tumble into the hole, and he certainly was lively enough, leaping here and there.

One afternoon Mr. Birch, the director, walked over to the Martin family, who were all sitting under a shade tree. The director seemed to have something on his mind.

"Did your children ever act in the movies?" he asked Mr. Martin.

"I don't believe they ever did," was the answer.

"Oh, yes, Daddy, I did, once!" cried Ted.

"You did! Where?" asked his mother, for she did not remember any such happening.

"Why, they took pictures of a baseball game in Cresco once," went on the Curlytop lad. "I was there in the grandstand. They took pictures of the people in the stand and they took mine. I saw myself in the movies afterward."

"Oh, yes, I do remember that," said Mrs. Martin. "But that wasn't really acting."

"Well, I can give them a chance now, if you'll let them take it," said the director. "One of our writers has made a change in this story we are filming, and we need three child characters in it for a short scene. If you'll let your Curlytops and their little brother take part, it will be a big favor to us."

"I don't see any objection," replied Mr. Martin, as his wife looked at him. "What do you want them to do?"

"I want them to ride on the back of a

pony," explained the movie director. "Mr. Dawson has a very safe pony, and I'd like to have the children shown crossing a meadow where the pony is pastured. They have been after berries, we'll say. On the way back they want some fun, so they ride on the pony's back—all three of them. We'll take pictures of them doing that."

"Three of them on one pony? Maybe the pony wouldn't like it," said Mr. Martin, with a laugh.

"Oh, the pony won't mind," the director assured him.

So it was arranged, and the next morning the three children went to the pasture, followed by some of the movie people and two camera men. Mr. Dawson had given permission to use the pony.

"Now don't think of anything except having fun," the director advised them. "Ted, you help your sister and your brother on the pony's back, and then scramble up yourself. Janet, you guide the pony as I call to you through my megaphone. But, above all, don't look directly into the camera. We want this to seem natural."

"You can't keep Trouble from looking at the camera," laughed Ted. "He's doing it

now. I guess he thinks music will come out."

"Well, it doesn't matter so much about him," replied the director. "But you two older ones keep your eyes away from the camera. Look anywhere but there."

There was a rehearsal first, and finally the director said the children did very well.

"All right now, we'll try it in earnest," he said. "Come on—camera!"

Ted led his brother and sister through the pasture toward the pony, which was a tame one and fond of children. The Curlytops had made friends with him the first day they arrived.

"All right now," called the director through his megaphone, while the cameras clicked away. "Put your sister up on the pony's back, Ted."

This was done, and then the delighted and shouting Trouble was helped up by Ted to a seat behind Janet.

"Now you get on, and try to make the pony run!" the director suggested.

Ted managed to scramble up on the back of the little horse, and he did it very well. But the pony this time seemed to dislike so many on his back. Instead of running as he

was wanted to, the pony kicked up his heels, and the next thing Ted knew he was falling off.

“Oh, you’re spoiling the picture! You have spoiled it!” cried Janet, as she glanced back, a funny look on her face, and saw her brother slipping off.

But the cameras clicked away.

CHAPTER XIV

JAN IN A TRAP

TED MARTIN hit the ground with a hard thump. He grunted, for the breath was knocked out of him. But he wasn't hurt. He knew that as soon as any one. At school Ted played football sometimes, and more than once he had had a harder fall than this.

"Whoa! Whoa!" cried Janet to the pony. She pulled on the reins and the little animal came to a stop.

"What's matter?" Trouble wanted to know. "Why don't horse go on?"

"Because Ted's fallen off," explained his sister.

By this time the Curlytop lad had leaped up and was running to get on the pony. What bothered him more than anything else was the fact that the camera men, laughing among themselves, were still grinding away at the cranks of their machines, taking moving pictures.

"Wait! Wait!" cried Ted. "Don't take me now! Wait until I get on the pony!"

"That's all right, Ted!" laughed Mr. Birch. "This is funnier and better than I thought it would be. Can you fall off again?" he asked, as the camera men stopped grinding, for Ted was now beside the pony which had come to a halt, with Janet and Trouble still on its back. "Can you fall off again, Ted?"

"Can I fall off again?" cried the boy, in surprise. "Do you mean you want me to fall off on purpose?"

"That's just what I want," replied Mr. Birch. "The cameras happened to snap you when you fell the first time. It made a good scene, and I'm going to change the story about to fit it in. But if you can do the same thing again, maybe in a little different way, it will be very funny. Want to try?"

"Sure I do!" declared Ted. "I'll be just like one of the funny men in the pictures, won't I?"

"Shouldn't wonder," agreed Mr. Birch, with a laugh. "Now get ready," he went on. "Janet, you guide the pony along and Ted will run up and try to get on. When he does you make the pony go a little faster

as if you were trying to get away. Then Ted will slip to the ground as he did before. You aren't afraid, are you, little man?" he asked Trouble.

"No, I not 'fraid," was the answer. "I like horsies an' I like nellifunts. Once I roded on a nellifunt, I did."

"Good! Then a pony oughtn't to frighten you," chuckled Mr. Birch. "Get ready now!"

Again the pony ambled forward, with Janet and Trouble on its back, and Ted ran forward to get on. Janet did just as the director told her to, and her brother slipped off in a funny fashion.

"That's fine!" cried Mr. Birch, with a laugh. "You children will be in the movies some day. It's a good thing you fell off, Ted, even if it was accidental at first, for it gave me an idea. That's the way it often happens in this sort of work—accidents, many times, make the best scenes."

"I thought sure he'd spoiled the picture when he slipped off," confessed Janet, when the cameras had stopped grinding.

"I did, too," admitted Ted. "I'd like to see how I looked when I fell."

"We'll let you do that some day," prom-

ised the director. And I might say that, later in the season when they were back home, the Curlytops saw this picture, in which they had had a part in making, shown in the Cresco Theater. Ted beheld himself running after the pony and slipping from its back in a queer way that made him laugh. All who saw it also laughed, including Ted's friends and playmates. As for Trouble, when he saw himself and Janet on the pony, the little fellow let out a scream of delight.

So, all in all, though at first it seemed as though their efforts were going to fail, the initial appearance of the Curlytops in the movies was quite a success.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin liked it very much at Dawson's Farm, and only for the fact that he had planned to make a tour induced the father of the Curlytops to carry out the idea.

"It would be nice to stay here all summer," he said to his wife.

"Yes," she agreed. "But I would like a little change, and so would the children. I want to get near a lake or a large river for a week or two."

"Yes, I'd like that myself," said Mr. Martin. "And if I can manage it we may take a motor boat trip. We'll stay here until

Mr. Portnay sends back that box of albums, and then we'll travel on."

"You ought to hear from him in a day or so," said Mrs. Martin.

"I expect to," replied her husband.

Meanwhile, the Curlytops and Trouble were having a great deal of fun on the farm. They were allowed to gather eggs and do some of the small chores about the place, such as feeding the chickens and taking salt to some sheep in a distant pasture.

Every day some moving pictures were taken, and when this happened not too far away the children were allowed to watch. Some of the scenes were filmed several miles distant from the farm, in rocky glens or in bits of woodland which were needed for the background. On such occasions the actors and actresses were piled into automobiles, or those who had horses rode them, and the whole company, cameras and all, would go to the spot picked out by Mr. Birch.

Once he filmed a fishing scene, and when Mr. Tizzy happened to mention the trick he had played on Ted, the director had a great idea.

"We'll do that for the movies!" he cried.

"It will be great. Will you children go through with it for us?"

"I guess so," said Ted, "if my father thinks it's all right."

Mr. Martin gave his consent, and so, for the second time, the Curlytops faced the camera. Or, rather, they didn't exactly face it, for if you will notice in moving pictures, the players hardly ever gaze directly at you, which means that they don't peer straight at the lens of the camera.

But Ted threw in his baited hook and waited for a bite, while the flip-flop man, hidden in the grass around the bend in the bank, fastened on a rubber boot. Another camera took close-up views of this scene, while the first camera was picturing Ted's surprise when he pulled up the rubber boot full of water which spurted from the hole in the toe.

The rest of the funny scene, with the shoe and the tin can, was also taken, and Trouble was even filmed catching a real fish, much to his delight. Then Mr. Tizzy did flip-flops while the children were shown laughing at him after they had discovered the trick. But the funny man did not again fall down

the hole, as that was considered too dangerous.

The next day Mr. Martin received a letter from the movie actor in New York, saying how sorry Mr. Portnay was to learn that his helper had, by mistake, picked up the box of albums.

"I am having your box shipped back to you by express," wrote the leading man. "I hope you will receive it safely. I may see you before the summer is over, as my company is going to travel in the same direction you are taking on your tour."

"Oh, I hope we do see him again!" exclaimed Janet, when the letter was talked about one afternoon. "I like him."

"So do I," declared Ted. "I wish I could ride a horse as he does, or like Mr. Weldon."

"Well, I shall be glad to get back Mr. Cardwell's albums," said Mr. Martin. "As soon as that box comes we'll travel on again and bid good-by to the movie folk, at least for a while."

It was some time later, that same afternoon, that Janet wandered off by herself to a little wood lot about a mile from the farmhouse. She wanted to pick some wild flow-

ers, and Ted, whom she asked to come with her, said he didn't want to.

But Janet did not mind going alone, for she had often been in these same woods before. She had been taking care of Trouble nearly all of that day, and Trouble certainly lived up to his name—he was full of mischief. Jan was glad to get away from him for a time, dearly as she loved him.

So she wandered about, picking flowers that grew in the woods and enjoying the beautiful scenes all about her. She neared a little gully, down the sides of which grew some blossoms she had not before noticed—beautiful red flowers.

“Oh, I'm going to get some of them!” she murmured.

Down the pine-needle-covered sides of the gully she scrambled, toward a big clump of ferns, near which grew the red flowers she so much admired.

The sides of the gully were steeper than Janet realized, and she was going faster than she thought—so fast, in fact, that when she reached the clump of ferns she couldn't stop. Right through them she had to run, and, before she knew it, she saw that just behind them, hidden in a growth of

tangled bushes, was what seemed to be a large box.

It was a box one end of which was open. Before Janet had time to wonder what such a big box was doing out there in the woods, and before she could stop herself, she had run right into it, through the opening.

"I wonder what this is?" thought the little girl. "It has such a funny smell—like wild animals in the circus!"

There was a clicking sound and the big box, which Janet was now inside of, began to tremble. Then came a jar and a thud, and it suddenly grew dark.

"Oh!" gasped Janet.

She whirled about, but too late!

Behind her, the opening was closed. The sliding end of the box trap—for such it was—had dropped into place, falling shut, and making poor Janet a prisoner.

"Oh, I'm in a trap!" she cried. "In a wild animal trap! How am I ever going to get out?"

CHAPTER XV

THE BOX COMES BACK

JANET MARTIN was frightened—very much so, though not so much but what she kept her wits about her and looked around the strange prison in which she found herself.

At first, when the sliding door in the end of the box trap had fallen, closing the only way out, it had been very dark. But in a few moments Jan was able to look about her, and she noticed that near the top of the box there were openings which let in light and air. The openings were merely holes, not large enough for a cat or dog to get through, to say nothing of a girl like Janet.

The box was about six feet wide, almost as long, and quite as high, so there was plenty of room for Janet to stand up in it and walk about.

“It would make a nice play-house,” she thought to herself.

But she did not feel at all like playing now. All she wanted to do was to get out of this box trap prison. So well had it been concealed in the bushes back of the clump of ferns that Jan had not noticed it at all until she had entered.

"I guess a wild animal would do the same thing," thought Janet. "He'd run right in here and be caught. I must have jiggled something that made the door slide down. And I guess there's been a wild animal in here not long ago. It smells so."

On the floor of the trap were dried leaves and grass; and the whole place smelled like the inside of the animal tent at a circus, a queer, wild smell which most of you know, I am sure.

"But if there was a wild animal in here, how did he get out?" thought the little girl, who, now that her eyes were accustomed to the semi-darkness, could see about her quite plainly. "If he got out, maybe I can."

She pushed against the sides of the box as hard as she could and she pounded with her little fists, but the box seemed very solid. Then she tried to raise the sliding door that had dropped shut behind her as soon as she entered the trap. But though this door rat-

tled and moved a little in the grooves in which it slid up and down, Jan could not raise it. It seemed to be fastened in place.

"Maybe the wild animal that was caught here didn't get out," thought the little Curlytop girl. "Maybe Mr. Dawson had to come and let it out; or maybe some of the movie people. I guess that was it—they caught a moving picture animal in this trap, and now they've caught me and I can't get out!"

Janet cried a little as she thought of this. It would soon be dark, she feared, and she did not want to stay in the trap all night.

"I know what I'll do," thought Janet, as she dried her tears, for she knew crying did no good. "I'll yell as loud as I can. I'll call and shout and somebody will hear me and come and let me out. Maybe Ted will come, or that funny flip-flop man."

Having thus made up her mind, Janet began to shout and call. Her voice sounded strange and hollow in the box trap. She wondered how far it would carry. She hoped they might hear her down at the farmhouse, but she hardly thought this possible.

Then a new terror came to poor Janet.

She began to think of the wild animal that had been in the trap.

"Maybe it was a bear," she whispered to herself. "And maybe he might hear me yelling and come to see me. I wouldn't like that. But, anyhow, he couldn't get in, since I can't get out."

For the first time Janet was glad the trap was firmly closed. True, she couldn't get out, but then, no wild animal could get in.

After Janet had called as loudly as she could for some time and no one had answered, she began to feel tired. So she sat down in a corner of the box trap, on the soft dried grass and leaves.

"Oh, dear! I wish some one would come and get me out!" she sighed.

It was about this time that Mrs. Martin began to inquire for Janet. The little girl had told her mother about going to the "wood-lot," as Mr. Dawson called it, to pick flowers.

"But it's time she was back," Mrs. Martin said to her husband. "It will soon be evening."

"I'll go after her!" offered Ted, who had just come back from a distant pasture, having been there with one of the hired men to

salt the sheep. Every so often lumps of coarse, rock salt were put in boxes in the fields where the sheep roamed. Sheep, and most other animals, like a bit of salt now and then. It keeps them healthy.

"All right, Teddy," said his mother. "I wish you would go after Janet. She's probably all right, but she has forgotten it is getting late. Very likely she has found more flowers than she expected and she wants to get a big bouquet."

"I come, too!" offered Trouble, as he saw his brother starting away.

"No, you stay here," objected Mrs. Martin, with a laugh. "We don't want you getting lost."

"I'll soon be back," Ted called to William.

The Curlytop lad well knew the path to the wood lot, for he and his sister had trod it many times since coming to Dawson's Farm. And now running and now walking fast, Ted was soon on the edge of the clump of trees. He looked about, but did not see any signs of his sister.

"Maybe she started back another way," he told himself.

But he decided to give a good look around in the woods, and when he had done so and

had not yet caught a glimpse of Janet picking flowers, Ted began to feel worried.

"Guess I'll give a yell and see if she answers," he said to himself. So he called: "Janet! Janet! Oh, Jan! where are you?"

Ted paused for a reply, but none came.

Then he called again, and listened. About him he heard only the rustle of the wind in the trees, the whisperings of the bushes, the tinkle of a distant waterfall and the songs of birds.

"I wonder where she is?" thought the boy.

Taking a long breath, he gave the loudest shout of which he was capable. It made him red in the face. Then he listened.

At last he heard an answer.

"Ted! Oh, Ted! Come and get me out! I'm in a trap!"

It was Janet's voice, beyond a doubt, but such a strange voice—and faint and far away. Ted remembered once when his sister had been shut in the preserve closet down the cellar at home in Cresco. Her voice then had sounded just as it did now.

"But there isn't any cellar here," thought Ted. Once more he called: "Where are you? I can't see you!"

"I'm shut up in a box trap!" answered

Janet. "It's by a big clump of ferns down in a little hollow."

Ted at that moment was standing on the edge of the gully into which Janet had run to get the red flowers. And, looking down, Ted saw where the ferns had been broken and bent to one side as his sister pushed through them. He also saw the top of the box hidden among the bushes.

"All right! I'm coming, Jan!" cried Ted, as he scrambled down the steep sides.

Janet had been roused from a half slumber by the call of her brother's voice and had answered him. Thus he had found her.

But when he stood in front of the box trap, Ted was a bit puzzled as to how Janet had gotten in and how he was going to get her out.

"How does this thing work?" he called to his sister, through the wooden sides. "How'd you get in?"

"I ran in when the door was open. I ran in before I knew what it was," answered Janet. "Then the door dropped shut. I guess I must have jiggled something."

"I guess you did," answered Ted. "Now I wonder if I can get this door open! I've

got to pry it up with a long stick if I can find one."

Luckily, the Curlytop lad discovered just what was needed—a long tree branch, sharp on one end, like a wedge. This wedge he put under the edge of the sliding door and pried it up. As the door raised a little, Ted, holding it in that position with one hand on the long stick, while Janet helped from the inside, thrust a stone beneath the door. There was a crack wide enough for Janet to thrust out her hand.

"But I can't crawl out through that crack," she said.

"I know it," answered her brother. "I'll lift it up higher."

This he did, a foot or so at a time, putting more stones and finally upright sticks beneath the wooden slide, until it was raised high enough for Janet to crawl out.

"Oh, I'm so glad you came!" she cried to her brother.

"So'm I," he said. "But what made you go in there?"

"I didn't know it was a trap," explained the little girl. "I saw some red flowers and I ran to pick them and before I knew it I was in the box, and I must have jiggled

something for the door fell shut behind me and I couldn't get out."

"I guess it's a wild animal trap, all right," Ted remarked. "It smells so," and he sniffed the air.

"Do you think they catch bears here?" asked Janet.

"Maybe," assented Ted.

"Then let's run home," suggested his sister, for it was now getting dusk in the woods, though it was lighter out in the open.

Ted took out the sticks and stones from beneath the door, letting it drop into place again.

"So nobody else will be caught," he explained.

Then he and his sister hurried back to the farmhouse.

"Say, now, that's too bad!" exclaimed Mr. Birch, the movie director, when he heard what had happened. "We did have some wild animals in that box, but they were foxes, not bears. And we didn't trap the foxes—we just held them in that box so we could let them run out when we wanted to take moving pictures of them.

"We hid the box in the bushes so it wouldn't show in the picture, and the door

was pulled up by a long rope. After we filmed the foxes some of the men must have left the door open, taking off the ropes. So it was turned into a regular trap, though we didn't intend it as such.

"The door thus left propped up, when Janet went in she must have 'jiggled' it, as she says, so it dropped into place. I'm mighty sorry about it, little girl!"

"Oh, I don't mind, as long as I got out before dark," laughed Jan. "But I was scared for a little while."

"I'll see that it doesn't happen again," declared the director. "We have no further use for the box, since we have made the fox films, so I'll have it taken away."

A few days later most of the pictures intended to be filmed at Dawson's Farm had been taken, and the company prepared to move on to the next location. Already some of the cowboys and other men and women connected with the company had left.

One last scene taken was where Mr. Tizzy, the funny flip-flop man, pretended to be a cowboy, riding a horse to lasso a pig. It was a lively affair. The animal used was not the savage boar that had nearly hurt Trouble, but a more gentle pig.

The Curlytops and their father and mother, as well as the Dawson household, laughed until the tears ran out of their eyes at the funny antics of Mr. Tizzy and the no less funny actions of the pig.

At last the flip-flop man lassoed the squealing pig, which, however, dragged the man off his horse and pulled him around the lot. And of all this the clicking cameras took many pictures which, later, made thousands of persons laugh.

It was this same afternoon that an express package came for Mr. Martin. It was a wooden box well wrapped in paper.

"What is it, Daddy? Oh, what is it?" cried Janet, dancing up and down in excitement.

"Oh, let him look first, Jan," admonished Teddy.

"Ah, the album box has come back!" said the father of the Curlytops. "Now I won't have to tell Mr. Cardwell it is missing. We can take it on the tour with us."

He tore open one end of the paper wrapping, disclosing the red, shining wooden box.

"No need to take off all the paper," he said. "It is well packed and I'll leave it so

and put it in the car. We'll travel on again to-morrow, Curlytops!"

Ted and Janet were glad of this, though they liked it at the farm. But children are always glad of a change, I suppose.

So Mr. Martin put the wrapped box in his car. If he had only taken off all the paper and had looked more closely inside, there would have been a different ending to this story.

CHAPTER XVI

ON AGAIN

WHEN Mrs. Martin called Janet the next morning, to tell the Curlytop girl to get up, dress and have breakfast, ready to start touring again, Janet, with her eyes still closed, began to call:

"Let me out! Let me out! Oh, don't let the bears come in!"

This awakened Trouble, and he wanted to know what the matter was.

"I guess Janet thinks she is back in the box trap again," said Mrs. Martin, with a smile. "Wake up, my dear! Wake up," she went on, giving her daughter a gentle shake. "You're all right, Janet."

"Oh! Oh!" gasped the little girl, as she opened her eyes. She was plainly surprised to find herself safe in bed in the room with her mother and Trouble. "I—I thought I was in the box trap and a bear was trying to come in with me," she said.

"I thought that was it," replied her mother. "It was quite an adventure for you, but don't think any more about it."

And Janet tried not to.

"I'm sorry to see you folks go," Mr. Dawson said to Mr. Martin, when the Curlytop family was at breakfast. "The old farm will be a lonesome place with you and the movie people leaving. The last of them will go to-day, too."

"We have enjoyed it here," said Mrs. Martin.

"We'll come back again," promised Trouble, as he finished the last of his boiled egg and drank the glass of milk. "I like it here a lot."

"I'm glad you do, my dear," said motherly Mrs. Dawson.

The big touring car was brought around to the side porch, and into it the Martin family baggage was piled. Mr. Martin made sure that the box Mr. Portnay had sent from New York was in a safe place.

"I hope nothing more happens to that box before I deliver it to Mr. Cardwell in Bentville," said Ted's father, with a sigh of relief as he put the small chest under some robes. "If I had known all the anxiety it

was going to give us, I'd never have promised to deliver it for my neighbor," he told Mr. Dawson.

"Well, when you have a lot of worry it's best to get it over with," said the farmer. "Be sure and stop off to see us when you come this way again."

"We will," promised Mrs. Martin.

Then the Curlytops were off again on their summer touring trip. More adventures lay ahead of them.

"Where are we going now, Daddy?" asked Janet, as they rode along a pleasant country highway.

"The next big place at which we expect to stop is called Evenham," was the answer. "But we won't be there before to-morrow or next day."

"Where do you expect to stop to-night?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"What would you say to camping out?" her husband wanted to know.

"In the tent?" cried Ted.

"Oh, what fun!" echoed Jan.

"I goin' to make a campfire!" declared Trouble.

"We'll see about that," his father answered. "Yes, if your mother thinks well of

it, we can stop in some good place, rig the tent up to the side of the car, and stay there all night," Mr. Martin went on to Ted and Janet. "It's going to be a warm, pleasant night."

"And can we cook a meal?" Ted wanted to know. "It isn't like camping out if you don't cook your own meal."

"Yes, we can do that, too," said Mrs. Martin, who liked camp life and roughing it almost as much as did the Curlytops.

So it was decided, and in the next town they stopped to purchase some bacon, coffee and other things they could cook over their alcohol stoves. They carried two small stoves.

About noon the auto was rolling along a quiet country road, and, finding a lane which did not seem to be much traveled, Mr. Martin turned off on that to be out of the way of traffic while lunch was being got ready.

Then such a good time as the Curlytops had, and Trouble also!

For they prepared a meal out in the open, and the table that was set was the running-board of the car, papers being spread on it for a cloth.

"Oh, I just love it here! Don't you,

Ted?" murmured Janet, her mouth half filled with part of a peanut butter sandwich.

"It's dandy!" Ted exclaimed, as he reached for another slice of bacon, for Mrs. Martin had fried some in a little pan over the stove which burned solid chunks of alcohol. And such a wonderful odor as that bacon gave off in the woods! It was worth going miles just to get a whiff of it.

After the meal Mr. and Mrs. Martin strolled about in the woods while the children played near by. The radiator of the car was filled with fresh water from a clear, bubbling spring, and then the touring party started on again.

"We must be looking for a good place to make our night camp," Mrs. Martin said, later in the afternoon. "We don't have to go on to any certain place, so if we find a good spot we might as well stop there and begin to put up the tent. We want to get everything in readiness before dark."

"That's right," agreed her husband. "So keep your eyes open, children."

Ted and Janet did, with the result that they pointed out several more or less good spots for a night camp. There were objections to most of these, however. But at last

Mrs. Martin spied what seemed to all of them to be a delightful place. It was in a meadow, on the edge of a clump of woods, and there was a spring of water near by. It is always wise to camp near water.

"This seems all right," agreed Mr. Martin, as he drove the auto into the glade. "And there aren't any neighbors."

He spoke truly, for there was not a house in sight. It was a beautiful spot, very quiet and restful.

"Not even a cow," said Janet.

Ted helped his father get the portable tent out and attach it to the sides of the car while Mrs. Martin prepared the evening meal. There were folding cots which, when spread out, made comfortable little beds.

It was arranged that Trouble and Janet would sleep on the seats of the auto, with the side curtains put up so they would be snug and comfortable. And on cots, under the extended tent, Ted, his mother and his father would pass the night.

Supper was eaten with keen appetites, and then the Martin family sat about in the beautiful evening glow, singing songs and telling stories. They saw no signs of life, no near-by farmers happened along, and not

so much as one car passed up or down the road.

The frogs in a distant pond began to croak as night fell, and pretty soon Mrs. Martin noticed that Trouble's eyes were closing.

"Bedtime!" she announced, and though Ted and Janet declared they weren't a bit sleepy, their parents said they had better "turn in."

"We'll get an early start in the morning," said Mr. Martin.

Trouble was asleep almost as soon as he had been tucked in on the comfortable auto seat, and Janet was not far behind him in journeying to slumberland.

But to Ted, out in the tent with his father and his mother, sleep did not come so quickly. The little boy pretended he was a cowboy, sleeping out on the plains, with a big herd of cattle near by.

Perhaps his lively thoughts kept Ted awake. At any rate, something did; but at last he, too, closed his eyes and was soon fast asleep.

Just how long it was afterward he did not know. But he was suddenly awakened by feeling something touch him on the side. It

was as though some one had "punched him in the ribs," Ted said afterward.

The little fellow opened his eyes and murmured:

"Is it morning, Mother?"

He imagined it was his mother rousing him by shaking him, as she sometimes did.

His mother did not answer. Then Teddy saw that the tent was dark. The sun was not streaming in. But through a crack the lad caught sight of a distant star. He knew it was still night.

But something had awakened him by touching him on the side. He raised himself on his elbow and listened. He could tell, by the deep, regular breathing of his father and mother that they were sleeping soundly on their cots.

Then from the outside of the tent something reached in and gave Teddy such a blow that he was knocked back on his cot.

CHAPTER XVII

ALONG THE RIVER

FOR a moment or two the Curlytop lad was so surprised, as well as a little frightened, that he lay quietly, not moving nor saying a word. Then he knew he must do something about it. Never would it do to let some strange man, as Ted supposed this to be, come into the tent and take Mr. Martin's money, or perhaps the box of valuable photograph albums.

"Maybe it's kidnapers after William!" was one of the wild thoughts that flashed into the mind of the lad. He was glad then that William was sleeping in the auto with Janet.

But in a moment or two Ted recovered the breath that had been knocked out of him by the blow that had sent him back on his cot, and he raised himself again. He could see more plainly now, for the side of the tent near his cot had become unfastened.

Whatever or whoever it was that had thrust Teddy back had loosened some of the tent fastenings, and through this opening the little boy could see the stars more plainly now.

Teddy could also see something else. This was a large object, with a mouth, a big nose, and great eyes, and, what was worse than this, Teddy caught sight of two spreading horns.

Then it was that the Curlytop lad let out a yell that awakened every one in the temporary camp—awakened even Trouble and Janet who were sleeping very soundly.

“Oh, Daddy! Mother!” yelled Teddy. “There’s a big animal with horns coming into the tent. Look!”

The head of the beast was now well within the tent, and it leaned right over Ted’s cot. But you can be sure the little lad was not there. No, indeed! He had rolled off on the other side, falling to the grassy ground.

But his frightened shout had awakened his father and mother, and the first thing Mr. Martin did was to thrust his hand beneath his pillow and get his flashlight. This little electric torch Mr. Martin always kept

near him at night, and it was useful in more ways than one.

Snapping on the switch now, he threw a small but brilliant beam of light over toward Ted's cot. At first he could not see the boy, and wondering what the noise was all about Mr. Martin asked:

"Where are you, Ted?"

"Here I am," came the answer, and Janet's brother arose from the ground where he had thrown himself.

"What in the world are you doing there?" asked his mother, who was sitting up on her cot. "Did you have nightmare? Were you walking in your sleep?"

"No, I wasn't walking in my sleep," replied Teddy. "But I gave a jump and I fell out of bed."

"What for?" asked his father, for he saw nothing to be alarmed about. And the reason was that the horned head had withdrawn itself out of the hole through which it had been thrust.

"What for? That's what for! Look!" cried Teddy, and he pointed just as the big head was thrust in again—the head with the large mouth and the big eyes, to say nothing of the horns.

Mrs. Martin stared as if she could hardly believe what she saw. She gave a gasp of surprise. Teddy, too, gasped, but no longer in fright. For now he saw what it was that had thrust its head into the tent.

Mr. Martin laughed, and well he might. For in the gleam of the electric flashlight they were looking at the calm features of a big cow that, with her head thrust into the tent, was quietly chewing her cud, leaning over the cot from which Ted had leaped in such a hurry.

"Oh, my!" cried Janet, who looked over the side of the auto into the tent to which it was attached. Then Trouble looked and he cried:

"Oh, a cow! A cow! Is it morning an' did the cow come to bring us milk?"

"Well, not exactly; though it looks that way," said Mr. Martin, with another laugh. "Was it this cow that frightened you, Teddy?"

"Yes, sir, I—I guess so," replied the lad. "I felt something poke me in the ribs, and I woke up, and then the tent side sort of flew open and this big head came poking in and I didn't know what it was, so I rolled off my cot on the other side."

"Which was a wise thing to do, seeing that you couldn't very well tell in the dark what was after you," said his mother.

"It might have been a bear," said Janet. "I'm glad it wasn't."

"So am I," added Mrs. Martin.

"Would a bear eat peanuts like a nelli-funt?" Trouble wanted to know.

"I guess a bear will eat almost anything," said Mr. Martin, as he slipped on his shoes. "I think I'd better go out and tie this wandering cow to a tree," he said. "Or else she'll be back just as soon as we get to sleep, bothering us again. For that's what she is—a wandering cow. She was probably tethered out for the night and broke loose. She must have come to pay us a visit."

"Well, some fresh milk for the morning coffee would be very welcome," remarked Mrs. Martin. "But I'm not going to milk a cow in the middle of the night. Fasten her well, Dick, so she won't get loose again."

"I will," answered Mr. Martin.

The cow was very gentle and tame. She probably did not intend to frighten Teddy by thrusting her horns against the tent, pok-

ing him in the ribs and afterward thrusting her head inside. It was all an accident.

Mr. Martin found a rope that was fastened around the animal's neck, and soon led her well away from the camp, tying her to a tree. Then he came back to the little tent and soon the place was quiet again, and all the Martins slept soundly until morning.

Getting breakfast was lots of fun, and they had fresh milk, after all. For while Mrs. Martin was making coffee a farm boy came strolling along, looking for the lost cow. When he heard what had happened and saw the creature tied to a tree, he milked her, Mrs. Martin giving him a pail for this purpose.

"It's only fair to give you some milk after the fright the cow gave you," said the farm lad, with a grin. "Where you folks going?" he asked, as he looked with eager eyes at the auto and the tent fastened to it.

"Oh, we're just touring around," Teddy answered. "I guess we'll go up the river to-day."

He had heard his father say they might do that, for they were near a large stream alongside of which wound a good road lead-

ing into a pleasant country with great stretches of woodland.

After breakfast, at which Trouble drank with glee some milk from the "night cow," as he called her, preparations were made for a trip up the river.

The tent was taken down and folded into a small space, as were the folding cots. Then, once more, the Curlytops were on their way. They soon reached the river road, and Mr. Martin was glad to find it in good condition.

"This will take us many miles on our way," he said.

All that morning they traveled, stopping at noon in a little glade of trees to cook and eat lunch. They were ready to go on again when Mr. Martin discovered that one of the tires was flat.

"There's a leak in that inner tube," he told his wife. "I might as well stop and mend it now and save our spare tire and tube. We might need to make a change in more of a hurry. I have plenty of time now, so I'll stop and mend that leaky inner tube."

This suited Ted, Janet and Trouble, who were having fun in the woods and along the bank of the river which ran near by. Mr.

Martin jacked up the car, took off the rim and tire, and, taking the thin, rubber inner tube from the shoe, proceeded to fasten on a patch.

He finished this work, and then, to make sure the leak was mended, he took the foot pump and filled the red, inner tube with air as it lay on the ground.

The tube was well pumped up and Mr. Martin was waiting to see if any of the air leaked out when a cry from the children on the bank of the river attracted the attention of father and mother. They looked up and saw Trouble and the Curlytops standing there and pointing to a small raft of logs that was slowly floating down the stream.

At one end of the raft was a little cabin, made of slabs of wood with the bark side out, and from this cabin, or shanty, was coming a curl of smoke, showing that this was where the lumbermen slept and cooked.

There was a dog on the raft, and when he saw the children he barked joyfully and wagged his tail. Then, unexpectedly, as the rear of the raft swung in close to shore, the dog leaped off and a moment later was frolicking with the Curlytops.

The "lumber dog," as Trouble called

him, seemed to be wild with joy at being once again on land and near children. He ran up and down, barking in delight and wagging his tail until it seemed it would come off.

Then, all of a sudden, the dog ran toward the blown-up inner tube which lay on the ground while Mr. Martin waited to see if it leaked any more.

The dog gave one look at what, to him, must have been a strange object, and then he growled and barked at it.

“Look out! Don’t touch that!” cried Mr. Martin, with a laugh.

He was too late, however, for the dog sprang forward and caught the tire tube in his mouth. He gripped it savagely, as a dog will do with something he fears, and a moment later there came a loud noise, as if a gun had been fired.

Heels over head that dog went toppling back, howling in dismay.

CHAPTER XVIII

TWO BEARS

SEVERAL of the lumbermen in charge of the raft of logs came rushing out of the slab cabin at the sound of the shot—or what they thought was a shot from a gun.

One of the men, seeing the dog, rushed to the edge of the raft and cried:

“Who shot Spot?”

“Nobody shot him!” laughed the steersman, who was chuckling so with mirth that he let go of the long sweep that was used to guide the raft. “Leastways, if he’s shot he shot himself! Ho! Ho!”

“Shot himself! What do you mean?” asked one of the lumbermen.

The Curlytops, also, did not understand what had happened. But Mr. Martin, looking at the inner tube of his tire which was now quite flat, knew what had taken place.

“Yep, Spot shot himself!” laughed the

steersman. "He bit into that blown-up auto tire on the shore and made a hole in it. He punctured it, and the air popped out like a gun, right in his face. I guess Spot thought he was shot, anyhow."

"It did sound like a gun," remarked one of the men. "Hi, Spot!" he called.

With a bark, the dog, his tail between his legs in fright, raced along the shore and gave a leap which carried him across the water between the raft and the bank and landed him on the logs. Then he ran inside the cabin and hid himself.

The steersman guided the log raft against the bank, thus bringing it to a stop, and he jumped ashore.

"I'm right sorry, sir, that our dog punctured your tire," he said.

"Oh, that's all right," replied Mr. Martin, with a smile. "It's easily mended again. We aren't fussy about dogs—we have one at home."

"That's good," murmured the lumberman. "Some folks don't like dogs, but they're a heap of company, I say. I reckon Spot must have thought your auto tire was a big, red bologna sausage, all ready for him

to eat, and he wanted to take a bite out of it."

"He might have thought that," said Mr. Martin. "His sharp teeth didn't take long to put a hole in the tube. And it certainly shot off like a gun."

"He doesn't know much about auto tires—this dog of ours," said the steersman. "I reckon he never saw a red blowed-up tire on the ground before."

"And he'll never want to see another, I reckon!" added a big lumberman in high boots. "He sure was a scared dog."

"Won't he come out again and play with us?" Trouble wanted to know.

"Maybe I can coax him out," said one of the men.

After some urging, Spot was induced to leave the cabin, where he had been cowering under a bunk. He whined and seemed still afraid, but when the Curlytops had coaxed him ashore and romped about with him, he regained his spirits and began to bark and leap about.

"Don't put that tube on the ground again after you get it mended," said Mrs. Martin to her husband, with a laugh, as she saw him at work, cementing another patch on the

place where Spot's sharp teeth had gone through the rubber.

"No, indeed!" he agreed.

And when the tube had been mended again Mr. Martin hung it over the rear of the car to dry. It held the air when he tested it, and, slipping it inside the shoe, he pumped it up fully and soon had the rim and tire back on the car.

By this time the raft had been worked out from shore and was ready to go on again.

"Here, Spot!" called the steersman.

The dog seemed to want to remain on shore and have fun with the Curlytops, but he knew his master's voice and, with a little whine and bark of farewell, he jumped on the moving raft and went on down the river.

"Good-by!" called Trouble, waving his hand to the dog. And Spot waved his tail in answer.

"Where did the raft come from?" asked Ted, for he had seen his father talking to the men while waiting for the second tire patch to dry.

"The trees were cut in the woods, quite a distance up the river," explained Mr. Martin. "They were floated down from the lumber camp, a few miles up."

“Could we go to the lumber camp?” asked Ted. “I’d like to see it.”

“I’d like to see it, too,” added Janet. “We had fun in a lumber camp once.”

“There isn’t much going on in a lumber camp in the summer time,” explained their father. “Winter is the busy season there, for the logs are cut and hauled through the woods to the edge of the water that is to float them to the mill.”

“How can the water float them to the mill in winter when the rivers and lakes are frozen?” asked Ted.

“That’s just it—they don’t float the logs down in the winter,” his father explained. “They pile them up near the river and wait for spring to come when the snow and ice melts and makes the water very high—higher than at any other time of the year. It is on this high water that the logs are floated down.

“However, there is some little work being done in this lumber camp now, the men said. They are cleaning up the logs left over from the spring freshet run, and this raft was one of that sort. I suppose we might stop off at this lumber camp, if your mother thinks it

would be all right," said Mr. Martin, looking at his wife.

"Do whatever you like," she said, with a smile. "We are touring around to give the Curlytops a good time, and we might as well stop at the lumber camp as anywhere else."

So it was decided, and after making sure nothing had been left behind, the auto party went on again.

Mr. Martin expected to reach the lumber camp that evening, and he knew he would be welcome there with his family, to spend the night, for the men on the raft had told him so. They could sleep in one of the log cabins, the steersman said, since only a few of the wood-choppers were in the camp now.

But the river road, which had been very good at first, soon became so rough that the auto had to be driven slowly, and not as good time could be made. Also the distance was farther than Mr. Martin thought, or at least farther than the men on the raft had told him.

When the evening shadows began to fall they were still traveling along, with no signs of the lumber camp in sight.

"I guess we shall have to camp out again to-night alongside the road," remarked Mr.

Martin, as he scanned the highway ahead of him and saw no sign of a house.

"That'll be fun!" declared Ted.

"Maybe a horse will visit you to-night instead of a cow," his sister said.

"I don't want either one," declared the lad.

Mr. Martin drove the auto on for another mile or two and then, coming to a place he thought would make a good camp—an open space near a spring—he stopped and the work of making camp for the night was begun.

The tent was stretched out from the side of the auto and the folding cots put beneath the shelter. As before, Janet and Trouble would sleep in the auto itself.

Mrs. Martin got the supper over the alcohol stoves, which, though small, gave good heat. Ted and Janet gathered wood, for their father had said they might make a campfire and sit about it before going to bed.

When the meal was finished Ted was allowed to light the fire. The children sat about it on smooth stumps, pretending they were early settlers living in the wilderness.

"It's just like the Pilgrims," said Janet,

who was fond of history. "Only there aren't any wild Indians or wild animals to come after us," she added.

"Yes, that's the only difference," agreed Ted.

"They is some wild animals," said Trouble, who was sitting near his mother. He suddenly arose and looked off toward the forest. "They is some wild animals here."

"Oh, no, there aren't, Trouble!" declared Ted.

"Yes, they is!" insisted his little brother. "They is two bears! I see them! Here they come!"

He pointed across the open glade, and the Curlytops, looking, saw, to their great astonishment, two bears shuffling their way toward them!

"Oh! Oh!" screamed Janet. "Oh, look at the bears!"

CHAPTER XIX

THE LUMBER CAMP

MR. MARTIN, who had been busy making sure that everything about the camp was snug and secure for the night, did not at first glimpse the bears. But he heard what Janet exclaimed and called to her:

"I wouldn't pretend so hard if I were you, Jan, especially about bears at night. You might scare Trouble."

"But, Daddy!" cried Janet, as she ran toward him, "there *are* bears! *Real* ones! And Trouble saw them first."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Martin, emerging from behind the auto, where he was making sure the tent flaps were fast.

"Yes, here are two bears, Dick!" said his wife. "And they're coming right for us! We'd certainly better do something!"

"I'll do something!" cried Ted, picking up a blazing brand. "I'll scare 'em with this!"

"No! No! You mustn't!" objected his mother.

"Bears are afraid of fire!" stated Ted.

"These don't seem to be," observed Janet.

"They're coming right for us!"

She had turned, on her way to join her father, and she saw the shaggy creatures still shuffling along. By this time Mr. Martin had reached the open place and he had a sight of the bears.

"Bless my stars!" cried the father of the Curlytops. "Who would have thought to find bears here? But they must be tame bears!"

"I certainly hope so!" exclaimed his wife.

"They must be!" said her husband again.

"Wild bears would run at the sight of us—not come nearer. Some lumberman must have caught these two when they were small, and he's tamed them. They aren't much more yet than two-year-old cubs. I believe they're coming to see if they can find something to eat."

"Oh, if they're tame bears maybe they'll do tricks!" cried Ted.

"Maybe they'll eat peanuts like nelli-funts!" added Trouble.

"Well, you aren't going to feed these

bears peanuts!" decided his mother, catching the little fellow up in her arms and stepping back toward the auto with him.

"Oh, look! They're eating!" suddenly cried Ted, pointing.

Surely enough, the two bears that had been shuffling along in the peculiar way bears have, had now come to a stop some little distance away from the campfire and began sniffing along the ground.

Suddenly one of them seemed to find some dainty, for he picked it up. And an instant later the other, with a sort of squealing growl, tried to knock whatever it was from the mouth of the first bear.

"They're quarreling, just like two boys! Oh, they must be tame bears!" decided Mrs. Martin, for the shaggy chaps seemed to have no interest except in each other or in what they could find on the ground.

"What is it, Daddy, they're fighting about?" asked Janet, for now the two bears were wrestling, standing up on their hind legs, and each trying to throw the other. Whatever the first bear had found had been knocked from him by the second bear and had fallen to the ground. Now they were struggling to see which should have it.

"It's my snandwich that I dropped," explained Trouble. "I was over by there and I dropped a snandwich (he always called them that) and the bears are eating my snandwich."

"I guess that's right!" agreed Mr. Martin.

As the two bears wrestled, more in fun than in anger it seemed, the one who had knocked the sandwich from the one that first found it, dealt his companion such a blow as to send him staggering off against a tree. Then the second bear pounced on Trouble's lost sandwich and soon ate it.

The first bear seemed to take it all good-naturedly and went sniffing for more tidbits that might have been tossed away or dropped by the campers.

"Oh, aren't they cute!" exclaimed Jan, for by this time it was evident that the bears would do no harm. They came to eat—not to run the Curlytops off.

"I'd like to know whose they are," said Teddy.

"And I hope they don't stay here all night," added Mrs. Martin. "I don't want to go to sleep, knowing a bear—no matter

how friendly he is—may poke his head in on me at any moment.”

“I’ll see if I can drive them away,” offered Mr. Martin.

“No, don’t do that!” begged his wife, clutching him by the arm. “They might turn on you and scratch you.”

“I don’t believe they will,” said her husband. “As you say, we don’t want to go to sleep with bears roaming around loose, even if they are tame bears.”

“Maybe they’ll go away themselves if we give them enough to eat,” suggested Janet.

“Huh, that’s just the way to make ’em stay around here!” declared Ted. “They’ll stay as long as you feed ’em—like a stray dog.”

It was evident that something must be done, for the two bears, having picked up all the scraps they could find outside the camp, were now approaching closer. They stood up and sniffed hungrily, moving their snouts about in a peculiar way. Nor did they appear to be afraid of the fire, on which Ted piled more wood.

“I wish their keeper would come and take them away,” said Mrs. Martin.

Then, as if in answer to her wish, a man

came running out of the forest—a lumberman, he seemed, with big boots on—and in his hands he carried chains that rattled and clanked. At the sound of the rattling chains the bears turned, like boys caught in a jam closet, and, dropping to all fours, would have run into the woods, except that the man shouted:

“No, you don’t, Jim! Come back here, Jack, you little rascal! Come here, I say!”

The bears paused, and then, as the man ran toward them and again shouted, they turned about and walked slowly back to him. In an instant he had snapped one end of the chains he carried into collars they wore about their necks.

“Hope my pets didn’t scare you folks,” said the man, as he playfully pulled the little short ears of his shaggy charges. “Jim and Jack are as gentle as lambs, but you’ve got to know how to treat ’em. Hope they didn’t frighten you.”

“They didn’t—exactly,” said Mr. Martin. “We were a bit surprised, at first, but the bears seemed to be content to pick up scraps about the place.”

“That’s what they love—picking up scraps of food,” said the lumberman.

"Are they your pets?" asked Janet.

"Yes, little girl. I've had 'em ever since they were little bits of cubs. Some one shot the old bear and I found these two, like puppies, whimpering on their dead mother. I brought them to my camp, raised them on a bottle until they were old enough to eat, and I've kept 'em ever since. This evening they got away, as they often do, and wandered off, so I had to take after 'em."

"Are you camping around here?" asked Mr. Martin.

"Yes, in a way," was the answer. "I'm not camping for fun, as you folks are. It's business with me. I'm manager of a lumber camp over in the woods."

"Oh, yours is the camp we have been looking for!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin.

"You've been looking for me?" echoed the man, who gave his name as Pat Teeter.

"We met some lumbermen on a raft going down the river," explained Mr. Martin, telling about the dog who bit the auto tire. "They said you might let us inspect your camp."

"Sure, I will. We'll be glad to have you visit us!" declared Mr. Teeter. "There aren't many men in camp now, and they'll

be glad of company. We're over in the woods about three miles from here."

"I'm afraid that's rather too far to go to-night," objected Mrs. Martin. "And we have things all ready here."

"Then come over the first thing in the morning," urged Mr. Teeter. "I'll go back now, with my runaway bears. We'll expect you in the morning."

"Will your bears do tricks?" asked Ted, as the shaggy creatures on the ends of the chains prepared to follow their keeper.

"Oh, yes. I'll show you to-morrow," was the answer. "Come over to breakfast, if you like."

"Thank you, but I think it will be best to come over directly after breakfast," answered Mrs. Martin.

Mr. Teeter disappeared in the woods with his two tame bears, and the Curlytops were quite delighted, talking of the fun they would have in the lumber camp the next day.

"I only hope those bears don't get loose again in the night and poke their noses in our tent as Ted's cow did," said Mrs. Martin, as they made ready for bed.

"I don't believe they will," said her hus-

band. "Mr. Teeter will be sure to chain them up well.

"If a bear comes I would like to ride on his back!" stated Trouble. "Once I did ride on a nellifunt's back. But I would like a bear ride, too."

"Well, maybe you'll get it!" laughed Janet, as she cuddled him in her arms.

In spite of what her husband had said about the bears being well secured, Mrs. Martin, several times in the night, awakened, thinking she heard the shaggy cubs shuffling along through the forest.

But nothing like this occurred, and morning came without anything having happened in the night. Breakfast was served and eaten, the things straightened up and put back in place, and off to the lumber camp started the Curlytops.

"There it is!" cried Ted, a little later, as they drove along the river road. He pointed to a cluster of log cabins in the woods, cabins set down in the midst of a clearing.

"Yes, I guess this is the lumber camp all right," assented his father.

"I see the two bears!" added Janet, pointing to the cubs, chained at the rear of one of the log cabins.

“Well, this will give us a new set of adventures—stopping in a lumber camp,” said Mr. Martin, as he guided the car over the not very smooth road that led up to the cluster of cabins.

At that moment, from down the road in the other direction, came some strange yells, shouts and cries:

“Yip! Yip! Yippie!” was yelled, and then followed more strange noises.

“What do you imagine that can be?” asked Mrs. Martin, wonderingly, of her husband, while several dogs in the lumber camp began to bark excitedly.

CHAPTER XX

A SMASH

MR. MARTIN for a time thought there must be some sort of fight or other kind of trouble among the lumbermen to cause all this noise. The lumbermen, he knew, were, some of them, rough characters, and he did not wish the Curlytops and Trouble to see any fighting or quarreling among them.

The children, however, were excited and curious. They looked toward the bend in the road whence the noise came, and a moment later Janet cried out in delight:

“Oh, it’s the movie actors! See, there’s Mr. Weldon!”

“That’s right—the cowboys!” added her brother. “I wonder what they are doing here!”

“They probably came to take some pictures in the lumber camp,” said Mr. Martin.

But taking pictures seemed very far from

the thoughts of the movie actors—at least, for the time being. They were intent on having a good time, for they were laughing among themselves and many of the men were giving voice to that “yi-yippy” yell which sounded so wild.

“I guess they’ve just finished some hard work,” said Mrs. Martin, as she laughed at some of the antics of the riders. “They’re like boys out of school.”

So it proved, for when Ned Weldon and some others of the men who had been friendly with the Martin family while at Dawson’s Farm, saw the family, they rode up and renewed their friendship, and also told why they had come here.

“We had to have a lumber camp location for this part of the film,” explained Mr. Birch, the director. “So we came here.”

“But we didn’t expect to find you here,” added Mr. Weldon, as he made his horse prance on its hind legs, much to the amusement of Trouble.

“We didn’t expect to come here,” stated Mr. Martin. “But when Mr. Teeter invited us we thought it would give the children something new to see for their vacation tour.”

"And they's bears, too!" exclaimed Trouble.

"I guess you mean elephants, don't you?" asked Mr. Weldon, who had more than once laughed at the little fellow's pronunciation of the name.

"No, not nellifunts—bears," insisted Trouble. "They's over there," and he pointed to the two tame bruins, chained to a tree. The movie actors had not yet seen the bears, it appeared.

But Mr. Birch had no sooner looked toward the cubs than he gave a cry of delight and said:

"Just what we want! You remember that scene, Weldon, where you go into the old cabin?"

"Yes, I remember that," answered the cowboy actor.

"Well, I've been trying to think of something funny that could happen there. The bears will be the very thing! We'll put them in the cabin, and you go in. Then the bears chase you out. It will be very funny."

"Funny for the bears, maybe, but not for me!" exclaimed Mr. Weldon. "Do you think I'm going into a cabin with a couple of bears?"

"Why, sure you are," replied the director.

"Well, sure I am not!" cried the cowboy. "I won't do such a thing! Do you think I want to be clawed by a bear and have my clothes torn?" and he made such a funny face that the Curlytops laughed.

But Trouble solved the problem by saying:

"They is tame bears. They won't hurt you, Mr. Weldon, and they eats peanuts like nellyfunts."

"Oh, if they're tame bears, that's another thing," said the movie actor. "But I want to be sure they are tame."

"Yes, they are," said Mr. Martin. "The bears came to our camp last night. We thought they were wild, but they soon proved to be tame. Mr. Teeter has raised them from little cubs."

"Just the thing for us, then," said Mr. Birch. "We'll have those bears filmed tomorrow. It will make a funny scene, Weldon, with you climbing out of a cabin window chased by bears."

"All right—I'll go through with it," said the cowboy with a sigh and another funny face which made the Curlytops laugh. "But

if they tear my clothes you'll have to buy me a new suit."

"I will," promised the movie director.

By this time the moving picture actors and actresses had quieted down and were getting ready to take their parts in the film. They were to remain in the lumber camp several days, and the Curlytops were glad of this, for they liked to see the work being done.

Mr. Birch hurried off to arrange with the tamer of the bears about using the animals in a scene with Mr. Weldon. The latter remained to talk to the Martins.

"Is Mr. Portnay here?" asked Mr. Martin. "I don't see anything of him."

"No, he doesn't take any part in this section of the film," answered the cowboy. "But we expect him to join us in a few days. Did you get back your box of albums that his man took by mistake?"

"Yes. I have the box here in the car," answered the father of the Curlytops. "We expect to reach Bentville soon, and then I will turn the old books and pictures over to Mr. Cardwell. I shall be glad to get rid of them, for I am always afraid something is going to happen to them."

One of the lumbermen came along then to say that Mr. Martin and his family could occupy one of the cabins in the woods while they were in the camp.

"It's only a rough shack," he said; "but it's the best we have."

"This will do very nicely," said Mrs. Martin, when they had driven over to it. "Cows can't poke their horns in, at any rate."

"No, ma'am, we haven't any cows here," said the lumberman, with such a puzzled look on his face that Mrs. Martin laughed and explained about the cow that tried to enter the tent while Ted was asleep.

The movie folk were distributed around the camp in the different cabins, and soon the place quieted down. This, as I have said, was not the busy season at the lumber camp in the woods, and only a few of the men were there. Because of this, many of the cabins were vacant, which gave the movie people and the Curlytops plenty of room.

The remainder of the day Ted and his sister, taking Trouble with them, watched the movie actors at work. Many short scenes were filmed, but the children were more interested in watching Mr. Weldon

practice, or go through, his part with the tame bears.

At first the actor was a bit timid when with the shaggy creatures. But after he had seen Ted and Janet feed them lumps of sugar, Mr. Weldon got courage enough to let them eat from his hand. After that it was easy, and he and the two cubs were soon on friendly terms.

"Now we'll try how it goes when they chase you out of the cabin," suggested the director.

"But they're so friendly they won't chase me," said Mr. Weldon.

"If you have some bread and molasses with you they will," said Mr. Teeter. "They'll go anywhere to get bread and molasses. Just have some of that with you when you play your part. Hold it out to the bears and then pull it away. They'll chase you from here to the end of Crystal Lake to get the sweet stuff."

So that was tried. One of the cabins in the open part of the woods was picked out as the scene in the picture.

The bears were put inside, and then Mr. Weldon got ready to go through his part. In his pocket he had some slices of bread

covered with molasses, which the lumber camp cook had given him. The bread was wrapped in waxed paper so it would not make the actor's pocket sticky.

The idea in this part of the film story was that Mr. Weldon was to enter the cabin, thinking it held a man whom he wanted to catch. So he approached the place on tiptoe. But no sooner had he entered, than the bears, who had been anxious to come out, rushed at him. They smelled the bread and molasses in Mr. Weldon's pocket. There was no need to hold it out to them.

"Now run!" cried Mr. Birch, while the cameras clicked.

There was no need to tell Mr. Weldon to do this. He took one look at the bears, hungry for bread and molasses, and away he rushed. After him lumbered the cubs—not angry, just keen to get the sweets.

"That's good! Fine! Couldn't be better!" cried Mr. Birch.

Finally the bears chased Mr. Weldon so closely that, tame as they were, he feared they might claw him in their eagerness. So he climbed a tree and dropped the bread and molasses down to the shaggy fellows.

This was all they wanted, and they

stopped to lick up the molasses, thus ending the scene.

"That was great!" cried the director.

"Glad of it," said Mr. Weldon, as he came down from the tree after the bears had been led away. "If it had been spoiled I wouldn't have done it over again. It was too exciting."

But there was no need to take the bear scene over again, as sometimes happens when movies are being filmed. It was all right from the first click of the cameras.

Other scenes were taken the next day in the lumber camp, and in some the Curlytops had small parts, much to their delight. They liked it in the woods, and Mrs. Martin was glad to remain a few days in one spot and have the shelter of a cabin in which to sleep.

Mr. Birch decided that as long as he was in a lumber camp he had better take some scenes of chopping down trees, and this was arranged for. Then, as his company was one producing comedies, he wanted something funny and decided to have a man up in a tree that was being chopped down.

One of the lumbermen volunteered to take this part, as he said it had really happened to him once. He jumped out of the falling

tree into another standing near by, and so was not hurt.

"I can do the same thing again," he said.

This scene took place on the edge of the clearing in the lumber camp, where the light was good. As the company carried no powerful electric lights with them, they had to depend on the sun, and in the depths of the woods there was not light enough for taking good pictures.

After some funny antics, the lumberman climbed the tree. Then another man began to chop it down. It did not take long, for the lumbermen know how to fell a tree in a few minutes. And as the big pine began to sway toward the earth, the trunk being almost cut through, Mr. Birch cried:

"Jump now!"

The man jumped, a camera filming him as he leaped from the falling tree to one standing near it. Then down to the earth crashed the tall pine.

There was a shout of dismay from some of the movie people standing off to one side.

"I hope no one was hurt," said Mrs. Martin.

Mr. Teeter came running up through the cloud of dust caused by the fall of the tree.

"There's been a smash," he said.

"A smash?" repeated Mr. Martin.

"Yes. That tree didn't fall just the way it should, and it smashed down on your auto."

"Oh, is our car smashed?" cried Ted.

"Not all of it, but one wheel is," said a lumberman. "I'm afraid you Curlytops can't continue your tour. I'm very sorry."

CHAPTER XXI

ABOARD THE MOTOR BOAT

NOTHING could have been more of a disappointment to the Curlytops just then than to hear they could not keep on touring around. They were having such fun they did not want it to stop. But if they had no auto to go in, they would have to return home—and the trip wasn't half finished!

"And how are we going to take those albums to Mr. Cardwell?" said Teddy.

"Let's go and see how badly the car is damaged," suggested Mr. Martin. "Perhaps it can be repaired so we can go on."

"It will need a new wheel," answered the lumberman. "I think one can be sent on from the factory, or the nearest supply house, but it will take several days. It's too bad!"

"It couldn't have been helped, I suppose," said Mr. Martin, as, with his wife and

children, he walked toward his car. "I shouldn't have left it there."

"The tree was taller than any of us thought," said the lumberman. "The end of it stuck out farther than we calculated, and it was just the tip of it that hit your front wheel."

It did not take more than a glance from Mr. Martin to tell him that he could not continue touring in his auto—at least, until a new wheel was secured.

"If only the tire or the rim had been broken, we could have managed," he said. "For we carry a spare tire and rim. But I haven't an extra wheel."

"We'll get you one," offered Mr. Birch. "It was the fault of our company that your wheel was broken, and we'll pay for a new one. I'll telegraph and have one sent on from Blissville at once. There is a branch agency there that keeps parts for your car."

"Don't worry about it," said Mr. Martin. "It can't be helped now. I am glad no one was hurt. There is no great hurry about our tour—a few days' wait will not matter."

But it would take more than a few days to supply a new wheel for the one broken on the auto, it was found out. The agency

was out of wheels for the kind of car Mr. Martin owned, and it would be necessary to send to Michigan for one. This would take about two weeks, stated the telegram that came in reply to the one Mr. Birch had sent.

"Do you think we want to stay in this lumber camp two weeks more?" asked Mrs. Martin of her husband.

"Hardly," he answered. "And yet I don't see how we can continue our tour without a car."

"Couldn't we go on horseback?" asked Ted. "When we were at Uncle Frank's ranch we rode on ponies."

"I'd like a pony," Janet said.

"The ponies might be all right for you two Curlytops and for me," said their father. "But I hardly think your mother and Trouble could manage it. No, we had best either go back home or wait here for a new wheel."

Mr. Birch was saying how sorry he was that the plans of the family had thus been spoiled when Mr. Teeter suddenly asked:

"How about a motor boat?"

"A motor boat?" asked Mr. Martin. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," explained the lumberman,

"how would you like to keep on touring in a motor craft? I suppose cruising would be a better word than touring, when you speak of a boat. But how about it?"

"A boat would be dandy fun!" exclaimed Ted.

"I think so, too," added his sister.

"But it would take us as long to arrange to hire a boat as it would to wait for a new wheel," objected Mr. Martin. "Besides, how could we get to Bentville by boat?"

"Very easily," answered Mr. Teeter. "Rockaway River, which is the stream we float our logs down, flows from Crystal Lake, about fifty miles up country. You could cruise along the river, and so get to the lake. Then you cross the lake and you're right at Bentville."

"Yes, I suppose we could do that," admitted Mr. Martin, after thinking it over. "But what about a boat? Where could we get one?"

"Take mine," offered the lumberman. "I have a very good little cabin motor boat down in the river. You can put your things from the auto into the boat and keep on going."

"Oh, Daddy, let's do it!" cried Ted.

"Please!" added Janet.

"I like a boat on the water," crooned Trouble. "Nellifunts, they squirt water out of they trunks."

"What do you say, Ruth?" asked Mr. Martin of his wife.

"It sounds very nice," she answered, with a smile. "But I should like to see the boat. Is there room on it for all of us?"

"Plenty," said Mr. Teeter. "Come on, I'll show you."

It wasn't far from the lumber camp to the Rockaway River, and at a small dock was tied the gasoline motor boat, *Pine Tree*. This was a very good name, the Curlytops thought, for a boat owned by a lumberman.

"Say, she's a dandy!" exclaimed Ted, as he went on board.

"I like this better than an auto," said Janet. "There's more room to move about."

This was true. Though the *Pine Tree* was not an especially large motor boat, there was much more room on her than in even the largest touring car. There was a cabin in which they could eat, and at night the table folded up out of the way and bunks, like those in sleeping cars, could be let down. A sliding partition made the large cabin into

two small ones. One could be used by Ted and his father, while the other would do for Mrs. Martin, Janet and William.

"Well, do you think you want to go cruising for a while instead of autoing?" asked the lumberman.

"Yes, indeed, thank you," said Mrs. Martin. "I'm almost glad, now, that the wheel was broken. This is a lovely little boat."

So it was arranged. The baggage from the Martin car was put aboard the *Pine Tree*, and the lockers and pantry were stocked with food. Things could be cooked on a gasoline stove in the little galley, or kitchen.

"Don't forget the albums," said Mrs. Martin to her husband, when the boat was being made ready. "We don't want to leave them behind."

"No, indeed," he answered. "I have them here."

He stowed away, on board the *Pine Tree*, the box of old albums which had been entrusted to him. They were still wrapped up as they had come by express from Mr. Portnay in New York. The movie actor, it was said by Mr. Birch, had been ill and would

not resume work for a time. Then he expected to go West to complete the film, part of which the Curlytops had seen made.

"All aboard!" called Mr. Martin, on the morning when a fresh start was to be made in the touring plans of the Curlytops. "All aboard!"

The lumbermen and the movie people had said good-by, wishing the Curlytops and their family all sorts of good luck. Mr. Teeter arranged for the Martins to come back in the boat and leave it at the camp when they had cruised as much as they wished.

"By that time I'll have a new wheel on your auto," he told Mr. Martin, "and you can drive home in the car."

"That's a good idea," said the father of the Curlytops.

You can imagine how delighted Ted, Janet and Trouble were as they sat on the little deck of the *Pine Tree* and looked at the scenery along the Rockaway River, up which they were puffing their way to reach Crystal Lake. Mr. Martin knew how to run and steer a motor boat. In quiet stretches of the river he allowed Ted and Janet to hold the wheel for a time.

"It's just lovely here," said Mrs. Martin with a happy sigh as she leaned back against a cushion. "It's much nicer than the auto."

Mr. Martin thought so, too, and while of course he did not like to have wheels smashed, still some good came out of it. Up the winding river went the *Pine Tree*, new scenes presenting themselves every minute.

They did not have to go ashore to spend the night, nor even stop for meals, which were cooked on board. Mrs. Martin took charge in the galley, and Ted and Janet gave whoops of delight when she blew a whistle which meant that the first lunch was ready.

They did not speed along, for, as before, Mr. Martin was in no hurry, but they took their time, and that afternoon, as they were passing a large town, they tied up at a wharf and went ashore, as Mrs. Martin wanted to buy some food which they had not been able to put on board at the lumber camp.

"We aren't going to travel in the night, are we?" asked Ted of his father, as they puffed along late that afternoon, the cupboard having been well stocked at the last stopping place.

"No, I hardly think so," he answered. "I don't know this river well enough to

navigate it after dark. When it gets a little later we'll anchor for the night, and go on in the morning."

"Are we going to sleep on this boat?" Trouble wanted to know.

"Of course," answered Ted. "Do you think you're going to sleep in the water?"

"I don't see any beds," remarked the little fellow, looking about.

"Well, I don't wonder at that," laughed his mother. "The beds are folded up, my dear. They come down like this."

As I have told you, the berths in the *Pine Tree* were made to fold up during the day like those in a sleeping car. A turn of a handle and a pull brought down the beds out of recesses in the cabin walls. There were blankets, sheets and pillows stored in each berth, just as on a sleeper.

"Oh, I like these little beds!" cried Trouble, as he saw them come down.

"It's a dandy boat," declared Ted.

When it was dark Mr. Martin ran the boat near shore and dropped the anchor. Then, after a while, they all "turned in," as a sailor would say—that is, they went to bed.

Janet suddenly awakened in the night—how late it was she didn't know—but some-

thing disturbed her. A low light, operated by a storage battery, gleamed in the tiny cabin, and Janet looked across to the bunk where her mother was sleeping, with Trouble on the berth below her.

"Mother! Mother!" called Jan, in a low voice, so as not to awaken her small brother.

"Yes, dear, what is it?" asked Mrs. Martin. She was a light sleeper, accustomed to being awakened many times in the night by her children.

"I think," said Janet in a whisper, "somebody is running away with the *Pine Tree*."

"Running away with the *Pine Tree*! Do you mean with this boat?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Yes, Mother! We're moving! Don't you feel it?"

CHAPTER XXII

ON THE LAKE

MRS. MARTIN sat up in her berth and listened. She could hear no sound except the gentle lapping of the water against the sides of the *Pine Tree*. There had been no motion when she went to sleep, for the river did not flow swiftly at this point. But something had awakened Janet.

"Don't you feel it, Mother?" asked the little Curlytop girl. "Don't you feel us moving?"

"Yes, I certainly do," Mrs. Martin said, after sitting still for a few seconds. "We are certainly moving. I'll call your father."

"Do you think anything is going to happen?" asked Janet, greatly excited by this time.

"No, I think we are dragging our anchor—that's all," answered her mother. "It must be seen to."

Putting on her dressing gown and slippers, Mrs. Martin went to the other cabin where her husband was sleeping with Ted. A touch on his shoulder awakened Mr. Martin.

"What is it?" he asked sleepily. "Have we reached Pittsburgh yet, porter?"

"You aren't in a sleeping car, traveling to Pittsburgh," laughed his wife. In his earlier days Mr. Martin had been a traveling salesman and covered many thousands of miles in sleeping cars.

"What is it, then?" he asked, sitting up. By the gleam of the little light he saw his wife standing near his berth.

"The boat is moving," she told him.

"Moving?"

"Yes. Don't you feel it? Janet felt it first and called me. I think we are dragging our anchor."

"So we are!" exclaimed Mr. Martin, as he felt the sensation of the boat moving. "But it isn't anything serious. I'll drop it in a new place where it will hold better."

As he was putting on a coat and trousers to go out on the little forward deck, where the anchor rope was caught around a cleat, Ted awakened.

"What's the matter?" he wanted to know. "I'll go up and help you, Daddy," he offered, when told of the trouble.

"All right—come along," agreed his father. "You had better go back to bed," Mr. Martin suggested to his wife.

"Yes, I'll stay with Trouble and Janet," she agreed.

It was dark up on deck, for the *Pine Tree* was anchored in the river away from any town or city. The stars alone dispelled the blackness of the night.

But Mr. Martin had a powerful flashlight with him, and, switching this on, he held it over the side, focusing the electric rays on the water. Then he noticed something that made him exclaim in wonder.

"What's the matter?" asked Ted.

"Why, we're going upstream instead of down," was the answer. "If we were dragging our anchor we would float down the river with the current. We wouldn't go up as we do when the motor is running."

"The motor isn't running now," said Ted, and it was not—the engine having been shut off when they anchored for the night. "But what makes us move, Daddy?"

"Something has hold of our anchor rope

and is pulling us upstream by it," said Mr. Martin.

"You mean an alligator?" asked Ted. "Oh, I wish it was daylight! I'd like to see an alligator!"

"No, not an alligator," said Mr. Martin, with a smile. "There are none of those creatures in these waters. But something is towing us all right."

"Maybe it's river pirates," suggested the Curlytop boy. "You know Mr. Teeter said river pirates once took this boat."

"It isn't pirates," declared Mr. Martin. "They would have to use a boat to tow us away and there isn't a boat in sight. No, something has hold of our anchor rope beneath the water. See?"

He held the flashlight on the hemp cable. Ted could see where it went down into the water, and just ahead of it were little ripples such as are caused when a stick or a rope is dragged through the water.

"What do you suppose it is, Daddy?" asked the lad.

"Some sort of fish, or other water creature, has got caught in our anchor," decided Mr. Martin. "It's towing us."

"Maybe it's a big turtle," said Teddy. "A big mud or snapping turtle."

"Maybe," agreed his father. "I'm going to see. Here, Ted, you hold the flashlight and I'll haul up on the anchor rope."

The Curlytop boy focused the rays of the powerful little electric torch on the rope extending into the water and Mr. Martin, taking hold of the cable, near the deck cleat around which it was wound, began to pull up. It was hard work, but finally he managed to get some slack, and then Ted cried:

"Oh, I see! It's a big turtle!"

"Yes, so it is," agreed his father. For he had pulled up enough of the anchor and rope to show a great snapping turtle with one of his flippers caught on the rope, just where it was fastened to the "mud hook," as sailors sometimes call an anchor.

"Can you pull him on board, Daddy?" asked Teddy.

"I don't know that I want to," was his father's answer. "He looks like a pretty ugly customer."

A moment later the turtle gave a wriggle and dropped off into the water with a splash. Pulling him up had loosened his hold on the anchor rope. Then Mr. Martin let go the

rope, the anchor dropped back to the bottom of the river and held in the mud, bringing the boat to a stop.

"Now I guess we're all right," said Mr. Martin, as he went down with Ted, who looked to see the turtle rise again, but it did not.

"What was it?" Mrs. Martin wanted to know.

"A big snapping turtle, crawling along on the bottom of the river, got caught in our anchor and rope," explained her husband. "He kept right on crawling, pulled up our anchor from the mud, and swam away.

"He was so powerful that he was able to tow our boat," went on Mr. Martin. "It wasn't hard to do, once he got it started, and being on the bottom he could get a good hold for his feet, which have claws on them. When I pulled up the rope I loosened his hold."

"If we could keep that turtle, and train him, he would pull the boat for us, and we wouldn't have to use gasoline," said Teddy.

"I'm afraid we'd be several years getting where we want to go," laughed his father. "A turtle is pretty slow."

They went back to bed and were not dis-

turbed again that night. In the morning the Curlytops looked for a sign of the turtle, and even tossed bits of meat into the river, hoping to tempt him to rise, but he did not, probably being asleep in the mud.

They traveled on all that day, having a good time aboard the *Pine Tree* and late that afternoon they reached the place where the river flowed out of Crystal Lake.

"To-morrow we'll cruise across the lake and reach Bentville," said Mr. Martin. "Then I'll deliver the albums and after we spend some time here, motoring about, we'll cruise back to the lumber camp and get our auto, which ought to have a new wheel on by then."

"This is a big lake," said Mrs. Martin, looking across it as evening settled down. "I hope no storms come when we are in the middle."



THE CURLYTOPS AND TROUBLE WENT ASHORE.

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CHAPTER XXIII

THE WRONG BOX

MR. MARTIN decided to anchor the *Pine Tree* for the night, rather than to try to cruise across the large body of water in the darkness. He had never been on the lake before, though he had directions for reaching Bentville.

"But this is a good place to stay," he told his wife, when they had reached the point where the river flowed out of the lake. "We'll camp here."

"Do you mean go ashore and camp?" asked Teddy.

"Oh, no; we'll stay on the boat," his father answered. "It will be better, I think."

"Maybe a big turtle will give us a ride again," suggested Trouble. He had been told how the queer creature of the mud had towed the motor boat, and his great regret was that he had not been awakened to see it.

"No, I hardly think a thing like that will happen the second time," said Mr. Martin, with a laugh. "It was only by accident that the turtle got tangled in our anchor rope."

Then they made ready to spend the night on board the *Pine Tree*. The anchor was let down but a short distance from shore, the boat being close to the bank so they could all reach dry land by crossing a small gang-plank which Mr. Martin ran out.

When the boat had been made fast, the Curlytops and Trouble went ashore, leaving their mother and father to get supper, for Mr. Martin was helping his wife.

"Don't go too far, children," called Mrs. Martin to the three who were wandering along the shore of Crystal Lake.

"We'll soon be back," promised Janet.

"I'm going to see if I can find any apples," said Teddy.

"You'll hardly find any apple orchards around here," said his father.

But the Curlytop boy did. He was walking along ahead of his sister and small brother when he suddenly saw a group of trees in a green field, and a second look told Ted they were apple trees.

"Come on," he cried. "Let's see if any of the apples are ripe."

"Maybe we'd better not," said Janet. "Whoever owns these apples wouldn't like us to take any."

"Nobody owns 'em," said her brother. "There's no house around here. I guess they're just wild apples and anybody that wants can pick 'em."

Ted had rather queer ideas, but he meant no wrong, and soon the three children were under the trees, gathering the fruit. It was just getting ripe.

Presently Trouble, who seemed to care more about running around than he did about picking up apples, gave a cry and pointed at something in a distant field.

"What is it?" asked Janet.

"It's a man. He's coming here," announced the little fellow. "I see a tramp man."

"Oh, Ted!" gasped Janet, "what'll we do?"

"Well, if it's a tramp we'll just go back to our boat," decided the Curlytop lad. "He won't dare say a word when he sees father and mother."

"Yes, but s'posin' it's the man that owns these apples?" went on Jan.

"Well," and Teddy thought about that a moment, "we can say daddy will pay him for 'em, and he will. We only took some because we didn't think anybody wanted 'em. I'm not afraid."

"Where's the man, Trouble? Show me," Jan told her small brother. "I don't see any one."

"There he is," and Trouble led Janet to a corner of the fence. It was from here that he had looked before, coming back to tell the news.

"He's taking his time getting here," thought Teddy, munching an apple and following his sister and brother. Ted decided that if there was to be a fuss about the apples he might as well have one to eat, anyhow.

"There's the man," Trouble said, pointing the individual in question out to his sister and brother.

Jan noted the ragged flapping coat and the ragged hat set on one side of the head. Then Ted saw it and gave a howl of laughter.

"Don't make fun of him!" his sister

begged. "The farmer won't like it, and he'll scold us for taking his apples."

"Farmer!" chuckled Ted. "That isn't a farmer."

"Well, tramp then," went on Janet. "He does look like a tramp."

"It isn't a tramp, either," laughed Ted.

"What is it then?" Janet wanted to know.

"It's a scarecrow. That must be a field of corn, or something, over there, and the farmer that owns it has put up a stuffed man to keep the crows away. Ho! Ho! It's a scarecrow!"

"How can you tell?" asked Janet.

"'Cause it hasn't moved since we've been looking at it. Here, I'll show you!"

Ted caught up a stone and threw it at the ragged figure, the rock striking it full in the back. There was a sound as when a stone hits a board fence, and the ragged figure never moved.

"See! I told you!" cried Ted.

"Yes, I guess it is a scarecrow," admitted Janet. "I'm glad of it. Now we can take all the apples we like."

"Yes, it isn't an apple-scarer," laughed Teddy.

"But it looks terribly natural," said Jan,

as they turned back to the orchard. "No wonder Trouble thought it was a man."

The scarecrow was very well made, and in the dusk of the evening would have misled almost any one who did not know about it.

"My, you have enough apples for a pie and some sauce," said Mrs. Martin when the children reached the boat and had told about the ragged figure. "I don't suppose whoever owns the trees will mind our taking a few apples," she said to her husband.

"I think not. But to be on the safe side and to be honest I'll put twenty-five cents in an envelope and hang it on one of the branches," said Mr. Martin, and he did this.

Very likely the farmer who owned the apples was surprised on visiting his orchard some time later to find the money and the note with it. He had made a sale where he had not expected to.

The night passed quietly, but toward morning Mrs. Martin was awakened by the pitching and tossing of the boat. She looked out to find that the wind was blowing, making the lake very rough.

"Do you think it will be best to start with the wind blowing like this?" asked Mrs.

Martin after breakfast, when the boat was still tossing some.

"Oh, yes," her husband answered. "I think the breeze will go down. I am anxious to get to Bentville and deliver the albums to Mr. Cardwell. Then we can go about as we please."

"I think there's going to be a bad storm," went on his wife.

"Oh, I guess we'll get to the other side of the lake before it comes," Mr. Martin said.

But they did not. Though the wind went down for a time just as the anchor was pulled up and a start made, the breeze began to rise again when they were out in the wide water. The waves began to toss, and the *Pine Tree*, though a staunch, stout craft, began to pitch about.

"I wish we hadn't started," sighed Mrs. Martin.

"Well, now that we have, we might as well keep on," her husband said. "In fact, it is safer to go on, heading into the wind as we are, than it would be to put back."

"I like it rough," cried Teddy, holding fast to prevent himself being bumped about.

"It's like being on a nellifunt's back,"

declared Trouble. "It goes up and down and jiggles."

"It jiggles all right," said his mother. "It jiggles too much for me. What's that, do you suppose?" she said, as a crash sounded in the cabin. They were all out on deck at the time.

"Something fell," replied Mr. Martin. "Perhaps you had better go see what it is. I can't leave the wheel."

Mrs. Martin went down, followed by the children. In the cabin they saw that a pile of valises, which had been stowed in one corner, had toppled over. With the valises had been placed the box sent back from New York by Mr. Portnay.

In falling this box had come out of the paper wrapping, and had opened. And when Mrs. Martin looked at the contents she exclaimed:

"The wrong box! It's the wrong box!"

"What do you mean—wrong box?" called her husband.

"I mean Mr. Portnay sent you back his make-up box by mistake, and he has kept the box of albums! Look, here are his false wigs and paints. This is the wrong box!"

CHAPTER XXIV

TROUBLE'S PUSSY

MR. MARTIN, hearing what his wife said, gave a quick look ahead across the stormy lake. Then, seeing no other boats in his course, he fastened the steering wheel, so the *Pine Tree* would keep on in a straight line, and down into the cabin he hurried. He saw just what the others had seen—the pile of valises and also the wooden box with the cover opened.

“It surely is the wrong box!” said the father of the Curlytops. He noticed a collection of wigs, false beards and mustaches, together with a number of tubes of colored paint such as actors use whether in the movies or on the stage.

“Where are Mr. Cardwell’s albums?” Ted asked.

“I suppose they are back in New York in Mr. Portnay’s studio,” said his father.

"Unless he has discovered his mistake by this time," suggested Mrs. Martin, "and has sent the right box on to us at the lumber camp."

"He wouldn't know we were at the lumber camp," said her husband. "We only stopped there by accident."

"But Mr. Portnay knows that his company was there, making films," went on Mrs. Martin. "And he might think that they could tell where we were. I say, let's go back to the lumber camp and see if the right box isn't there."

Mr. Martin thought this over a moment or two, while the Curlytops and Trouble looked out of small windows, or portholes, in the cabin, noting how rough the lake was growing. The storm was getting worse, and the wind was howling loudly.

"There has been a mix-up and mistake about this box of albums from the start," said Mr. Martin. "I don't see how Mr. Portnay could make a mistake a second time and send us his paints and false wigs in place of the old books."

"The boxes look exactly alike," said Mrs. Martin. "I guess these movie people are so busy thinking about the parts they are going

to play that they don't pay any attention to much else. Or perhaps Mr. Portnay's man may have caused the mix-up."

"Well, it's a mix-up all right," her husband said. "And I think your advice, to go back to the lumber camp, is the best thing we can do. As you say, that movie man may come there or send the box there. We'll go back."

"I'd like to be out of this storm," went on Mrs. Martin. "It is getting much worse."

"Yes," agreed her husband, "it is. I think I can turn back, though, with safety if I use care."

"But if we have the movie man's things that he puts on his face to make him look different in pictures, how can he act?" asked Ted.

"I guess he can easily get another make-up box," replied his father. "But it is impossible for us to get other Cardwell albums, and the pictures of the twins, now dead, and the young boy lost at sea. We simply must get back the right box. So I'll go up and turn the boat around. Better hold fast, everybody, for it will be rougher going the other way."

"I'll come up on deck and help you steer," offered Ted.

"No, Son, you'd better stay below with your mother, and help straighten up the cabin," suggested his father. "Pick up the valises and wrap up that wrong box. Mr. Portnay will want it back, I think."

The Curlytops helped their mother set things to rights, and then, indeed, they had to hold on, for the *Pine Tree* pitched and tossed in the storm, much as might her namesake in a forest with a big wind blowing.

Once it almost seemed that the boat was going to turn over, so far did she tilt to one side. It began to rain, too, and Mr. Martin, up on deck, had to put on his rubber coat. But he was a good sailor, and knew how to manage the boat.

In the afternoon, following a hasty meal on cold victuals, for Mrs. Martin did not want to light the stove in the storm, the boat seemed to ride easier.

"I guess it's going to clear off," said Janet.

But it was not that. Mr. Martin was near shore now, and under the lee of a big hill, which kept off some of the wind.

When evening came the touring Curly-tops and their family were back where they had started from—the place where the river ran out of the lake.

“We’ll tie up here for the night, and when morning comes we’ll navigate down the river,” said Mr. Martin. “We’ll get to the lumber camp more quickly than we came away from it, for we shall be going downstream instead of against the current.”

“Suppose the movie people are gone—what then?” asked Ted.

“Well, the men in the lumber camp will know where they went,” answered his father. “We’ll find them sooner or later, and get back the right box of albums.”

It was still raining hard, but the wind did not blow so fiercely in the sheltered place where the *Pine Tree* was anchored. Jan was glad of this, for she did not like rough weather.

It was in the middle of the night, when the storm seemed to have quieted down a bit, that Trouble awakened his mother by calling to her. Mrs. Martin was ever on the alert for the calls of her children in the night, and she had formed a habit of answering them

when but half awake herself. Usually it was only a drink that William wanted.

But this time, when Mrs. Martin became aware that he was calling to her from his little bunk in the sleeping cabin, she did not hear him ask for water.

"Mommie! Mommie!" murmured the little fellow.

"Yes, dear, what is it?" asked his mother sleepily.

"Why don't you let the pussy in?" asked Trouble.

"What pussy, Trouble?" she asked, not yet quite awake. "There isn't any pussy here. You must be dreaming. Go to sleep again."

"Yes they is a pussy!" insisted the little fellow, sitting up in his berth. His mother could see him in the dim little electric light. "They is a pussy and she's mewling and she wants to come in out of the rain. Bring her in, Mommie."

Mrs. Martin thought Trouble was imagining all this, or that it was part of a dream. Often he had dreams and went right on with them when he awoke.

"I'll get you a drink, and then you can

go back to sleep again," his mother said, as she got up.

"Pussy wants a drink, too," declared Trouble. "She wants a drink of milk. There! Didn't you hear her mew?"

There came a lull in the storm and, to her surprise, Mrs. Martin heard, through a port-hole opened for ventilation on the leeward side of the boat, the mewing of a cat.

"Why, Trouble!" she exclaimed, "there is a pussy out in the rain. The poor thing!"

"It's my pussy!" declared the little fellow. "Bring her in!"

CHAPTER XXV

THE RIGHT BOX

HARDLY stopping to think why Trouble should claim as his the pussy that was crying in the night, Mrs. Martin started out of the cabin. Her husband, sleeping in the other cabin with Ted, heard her and asked:

“What’s the matter?”

“Trouble heard a cat crying. It’s out in the rain. He wants me to bring it in,” his wife answered.

“A cat?” questioned Mr. Martin. Then with a little chuckle he added: “I hope it isn’t a wildcat.”

“What’s that?” exclaimed Ted, suddenly awakening. “A wildcat? Have we got a gun to shoot it?”

“Now don’t get excited,” laughed his father. “This is a tame cat, I guess. I’ll go out and get it.”

Slipping on his rubber coat, for it was

still raining, Mr. Martin went out on deck. Near the porthole, which was open a little way, but not far enough to allow the cat to enter, was a crying, wet pussy, mewing pitifully.

"You poor little thing!" exclaimed Mr. Martin, who was as fond of animals as were his children. "We'll take care of you. But I wonder how you got here?"

The *Pine Tree* was anchored some distance out from shore, and there was no plank laid out on which the little cat might have crossed.

"I guess she fell into the lake and drifted down until she caught hold of our anchor rope," said Mr. Martin, as he brought the drenched pussy down into the cabin. "She climbed up on the rope and so reached the deck."

"The poor little creature," murmured Mrs. Martin.

"Let me have her—she's my pussy!" demanded Trouble.

He wanted her in the bunk with him, but his mother said the wet fur of the pussy would make the sheets damp.

"I'll dry her off and give her some milk,

and then you may have her, William," she said.

The little cat, warm and almost dry, was soon purring contentedly in William's arms and going to sleep with him, after lapping up some warm milk, for Mrs. Martin, now that the boat was not pitching and tossing, had lighted the gasoline stove.

Ted and Jan looked in at the sight of the stray pussy that had come to their little brother out of the storm.

"Isn't he cute!" murmured Jan.

"Who?" asked Ted, for she was looking at her little brother and the cat—both asleep now.

"They're both cute," whispered Jan.

The remainder of the night passed quietly, and when morning came the storm had passed and the river and lake gleamed in the sunshine.

"Now for another tour," laughed Mr. Martin, as he and Ted hauled up the anchor. "Back to the lumber camp!"

"And I hope we get the right box," said Mrs. Martin.

They were going down the river the second day, and expected to reach the lumber camp that afternoon when, as they turned a bend

in the stream, Ted and his father, who were out on deck, saw a small boat just ahead of them. There were two little boys in the boat, and as the *Pine Tree* came into view the boys stood up and cried:

“Help! Help!”

“What’s the matter?” called Ted.

“Sit down, boys. Sit down!” ordered Mr. Martin. “You’ll upset!”

The little lads sat down, but they continued to cry for aid, and Mrs. Martin and Jan came out to see what the trouble was.

“I guess they don’t know how to row, or else they’ve lost their oars and don’t know how to get back where they came from,” said Mr. Martin, as he slowed the *Pine Tree* and guided her close to the small, drifting craft.

His last guess proved correct. The boys were from a summer camp on the river. They had set out in a boat, thinking they could manage to row, but they knew little of how to do it. First one oar slipped overboard and drifted away, and then the other. The little fellows were helpless on the river, the current of which was carrying them away. So they shouted for help when they saw the *Pine Tree*.

"I'll tow them back to camp," said Mr. Martin.

This he did, and received the thanks of the parents who had begun to spread an alarm through the camp concerning the missing boys.

This turning back made the Curlytop family a trifle late, and it was after dark when they reached the dock in the river alongside the lumber camp.

"Hello, what brings you back so soon?" asked Mr. Teeter, as he came down with a lantern to see who was tying up at his dock. "I thought you'd be gone for a week longer."

"We got the wrong box," explained Mr. Martin. "Are the movie people still here?"

"No, they've gone," was the answer. "Left this morning."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin. "How unfortunate. Shall we ever get those albums back?"

"When I say the movie people have gone, I mean all those have gone who were here when you were," went on Mr. Teeter. "But the head man is here, Harry Portnay—the leading man I believe they call him. He's here with a couple of camera men. They're

going to make some pictures of him alone.”

“Oh, if Mr. Portnay is here, he’s the very one I want to see,” stated Mr. Martin. “I hope he has the right box.”

“He’s right over in that cabin,” said the lumberman who owned the tame bears. “I guess he hasn’t gone to bed yet—there’s a light going.”

Mr. Martin, carrying the wrong box, hastened over to the cabin of the movie actor. Mr. Portnay greeted the visitor, looked at the box the Curlytops’ father held out, and exclaimed:

“That’s mine!”

“And I guess that’s mine!” exclaimed Mr. Martin, pointing to a box just like it on the table. “Has that two old photograph albums in it?”

“Yes, it has,” answered the movie actor. “And has the box you have there some wigs in?”

“It has,” answered Mr. Martin.

“Thank goodness! Now I can go on with my picture. I really need certain wigs and false whiskers, because I used them earlier in the film, and it would look strange to see me go into a room with one sort of beard on and come out with quite another, which

might happen. I am glad to get my own box back again."

"And I am glad to get back my right box, the one with the albums in it," said Mr. Martin, opening the second package and making sure the Cardwell albums were within.

Then the actor explained how, in the hurry and bustle of getting to New York and looking after matters there, one of his men had packed and shipped the wrong box.

"I did not find it out until yesterday when I wanted to get ready to finish making this picture," said Mr. Portnay.

"And I did not open the box you shipped me by express, for of course I thought it was the right one," said Mr. Martin. "It was a series of mistakes all around."

"Well, I'm glad it has ended now," said the actor.

The Martin family spent the next few days in the lumber camp, watching pictures being made of Mr. Portnay in his false hair and beard, which completely changed his appearance. But the making of these pictures was not as interesting as the taking of those with the cowboys and bears in them.

"Well," announced Mr. Martin, a few

days later, when Mr. Portnay had packed his belongings and gone to join his moving picture company, "I think we had better resume our tour. The new wheel has arrived for the auto, and we'll go on in that."

"Whatever you do, be sure that you have the old albums in the right box," cautioned Mrs. Martin.

"I'll not let them out of my sight again until I deliver them to Mr. Cardwell," declared Mr. Martin.

About a week later, after a jolly trip and some adventures, the touring party reached Bentville and called on Mr. Cardwell.

"I'm glad to see you," said Reuben, the brother of James Cardwell, who had sent the albums. "I had a letter from Jim, and he told me you were bringing these. But I was beginning to think you were lost."

"The albums nearly were—more than once," said Mr. Martin. "But I'm glad you now have them."

"So am I," said the old man. "We think a great deal of these pictures," and he looked lovingly at the photographs of the twins and of the sailor boy, lost at sea.

So the summer tour of the Curlytops came to a successful end. They remained

for a time in Bentville, and then started back home, reaching there safely after some jolly adventures.

"It was the best summer we ever had," declared Janet.

"Corking good times!" exclaimed Ted.

"But we didn't see any nellifunts!" lamented Trouble.

"Never mind, maybe we shall next year," said Janet, with a laugh.

THE END

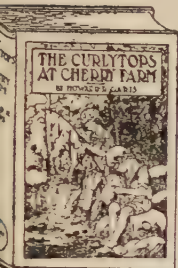
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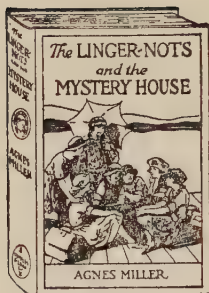
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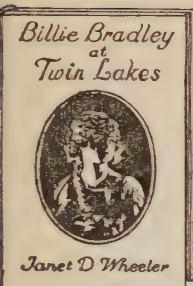
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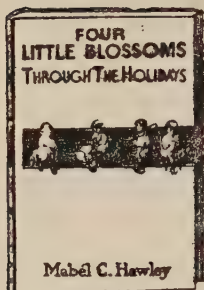
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